

AMMAN (Petra) — The Customs Department on Sunday endorsed an amendment to the regulations governing the certification of proforma invoices and importation documents. The amendments allow importers to clear their goods through customs procedures even if they do not have certified documents provided that they pay a refundable cash deposit of one per cent of the value of the consignment. Customs Department Director General Nazmi Al Abdullah said. The deposit amount will be refunded when the certified documents are presented within 60 days from the date of payment. Under previous regulations, importers used to pay a two per cent deposit of the total value of imported goods. Mr. Al Abdullah said the new amendment was made in response to a request by the Amman Chamber of Industry.

7 Israelis killed, scores injured in Gaza bombings

GAZA (Agencies) — Suicide car bombers killed seven Israelis and wounded about 45 on Sunday in two attacks near Jewish settlements in the Gaza Strip.

Islamic Jihad said one of its members crashed a car full of explosives into a bus carrying soldiers and settlers near Kfar Darom, a settlement beside the main highway south of Gaza city.

Security sources said the blast killed six and wounded about 40, seven of them critically.

Another militant group, Hamas, said a member of its military wing ran his

explosives-laden car into an Israeli convoy at the nearby settlement of Netzarim.

At least one Israeli was killed and several wounded, Israeli sources said.

Most of the killed were Israeli settlers.

Both groups said the attacks were in part to avenge the bombing death of Hamas members in Gaza a week ago. Islamic Jihad made the claim in a leaflet, Hamas in a telephone call to an international news agency.

The Hamas caller said the attacks were not coordinated.

Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) Chairman

Yasser Arafat, who rules most of Gaza under a 1993 peace deal with Israel, condemned the bombings as a "terrorist operation" by the "enemies of peace."

The attacks increase pressure on him to crack down on hardliners who have vowed to wreck the accord. Israel has conditioned further implementation of self-rule on improved security.

Israel will continue negotiations with the Palestinians despite the bombings, Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin said.

"We will not halt the negotiations but we demand that the Palestinian Authority in

Gaza prove its ability to fight terrorism," Mr. Rabin told reporters at the scene of one of Sunday's bombings.

"We will continue ensuring security for Israelis by maintaining the closure of the (Palestinian) territories, checks at crossing-points and patrols by Israeli troops in the Gaza Strip," Mr. Rabin said.

If there had been no closure the latest bombings "would have happened in Israel and the effect would have been much worse."

He said the Palestinian Authority "must prove that it can act against the fundamentalist organisations, whose main aim is to halt the peace process and strike at Israel."

Both Kfar Darom and Netzarim are isolated enclaves, north of the main settlements which are fenced off in a block in the south of the Gaza Strip.

Palestinians and Israeli left-wingers have called for the removal of all 4,000 settlers from Gaza.

Israeli cabinet ministers called on Mr. Arafat's self-rule government in Gaza to crack down on the militants and warned that the July 1 deadline for starting to extend autonomy to the West Bank would be slowed if no action was taken.

Mr. Arafat gave no indication if he would try to disarm the opponents of peace but

(Continued on page 7)



An Israeli wounded in Sunday's bombing in Gaza is brought to a hospital. (AFP photo)

Peres proposes Palestine in Gaza

TEL AVIV (AFP) — Israeli Foreign Minister Shimon Peres has proposed the creation of an independent Palestinian state in the self-rule Gaza Strip, officials said Sunday.

The minister outlined the proposal before parliament's foreign affairs and defence committee, his aides said.

In return for a sovereign state Mr. Peres suggested the Palestinians might relax demands for an Israeli army redeployment on the West Bank as envisaged in the Israel-Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) autonomy accords, the daily Haaretz reported.

But Palestinian leader Yasser Arafat has rejected the offer because he fears it would confine him to the tiny Gaza Strip and edge him out of control of West Bank affairs.

"This plan is contrary to the declaration of principles (on autonomy) of Sept. 13, 1993, and shows that Israel is

looking to separate the West Bank from the Gaza Strip," Tayeb Abdul Rahim, secretary general of the Palestinian National Authority (PNA), told AFP.

Haaretz said Sunday that Mr. Peres discussed the idea of an independent state of Gaza with the Palestinian International Cooperation Minister Nabil Shaath.

Mr. Peres told the newspaper, however, that "all sorts of ideas are being raised, but only those coming from signed documents will commit the Israeli government."

According to Dr. Shaath, a Palestinian state will emerge in five years' time.

"I have no doubts about the establishment of a Palestinian state in five years' time with East Jerusalem as its capital," he told the Amman daily Al-Dustour.

Palestinian self-rule was launched in the Gaza Strip and West Bank town of Jericho last May for an in-

terim period of five years.

Dr. Shaath said that despite difficulties in the Israeli-Palestinian negotiations "we will see in five years the birth of a Palestinian state."

Discussions are due to start on the final status of the Palestinian territories and Arab East Jerusalem by May 1996.

Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin is to hold ministerial meetings on Monday on the state of the negotiations on implementing the autonomy accords.

Talks on extending autonomy on the West Bank have stalled over an Israeli military redeployment outside Palestinian towns, originally scheduled for last July ahead of elections to a self-rule council.

The Jewish state has so far refused to withdraw its troops because of security fears for its 130,000 settlers on the West Bank.

The two sides have now set a July 1 target date for

reaching agreement on redeployment and Palestinian elections.

According to Israeli radio the redeployment will drain the country's defence budget of \$300 million — mainly for the transfer of seven army bases and various camps to Israel and the construction of new roads, watchtowers and barriers.

Haaretz also reported Sunday that Mr. Rabin and Mr. Peres held talks with an American Jewish pacifist, Jerome Segal, last week on a plan for an independent Palestinian state in Gaza and Jericho.

The state would give Palestinian nationality to all Palestinians in the diaspora and supervise a self-rule administration on the West Bank.

Mr. Segal said the plan could be implemented before Israel's general elections in 1996, where the prime minister is to be elected directly for the first time.



His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan, the Regent, on Sunday chairs a meeting at the Ministry of Interior (Petra photo)

Peace is more than a process of normalisation — Regent

AMMAN (Petra) — His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan, the Regent, said Sunday national level self-confidence should be enhanced on the basis of dialogue, the ability to listen to others' views and improved communications between people and authorities.

At a meeting held at the Interior Ministry in the presence of acting Prime Minister Abdul Raouf Al-Rawabdeh, governors and government department directors, Prince Hassan said the Ministry of Interior should respond to needs by sound planning.

He noted that some countries have combined the ministries of interior and planning because the interior ministry handles comprehensive planning rather than simply implementing plans.

Prince Hassan discussed means of developing the ministry's work and said the development process should be based on foundations such as "enhancing self-confidence based on our national understanding of

peace not as a normalisation process with Israel and that it would not be at the expense of Jordan's belonging to its Arab Nation and its role within this nation."

Prince Hassan said the ministry should formulate procedures of granting nationalities. He called on the ministry to adopt moves that allow Jordanian and Palestinian citizens the freedom to invest and move within the Arab World.

Prince Hassan drew a distinction between the ministry's role in maintaining order and as an institution enhancing participation in the decision-making process.

Prince Hassan urged the ministry to proceed with special programmes aimed at opening itself to the people and to organise workshop and meetings to enable all to obtain the information they need in their work.

Prince Hassan outlined the duties of the state and its institutions in general and the Ministry of Interior in particular with emphasis on its

duties in enhancing the spirit of civil society and the rule of law.

The Regent also established a link between the high number of the unemployed and the number of expatriate labourers in Jordan. Employers sometimes favour expatriate workers over Jordanians, he noted. This requires scientific studies to determine the kind of unemployment in the Jordanian society, he said.

Prince Hassan also dealt with technical and procedural issues facing citizens starting with traffic problems, their causes and the need to reconsider some issues related to road accidents.

The Crown Prince also reviewed plans to build model villages in southern Jordan, dam projects, a new airport project, a new thermal station and the Aqaba port.

At the outset of the meeting, Interior Minister Salameh Hammad welcomed the Prince and briefed him on

(Continued on page 7)

King's U.S. talks very positive, Kabariti says

By P.V. Vivekanand
Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — Foreign Minister Abdul Karim Kabariti on Sunday described as highly positive the outcome of His Majesty King Hussein's visit to Washington and said American congressmen now had a better understanding of the Middle East peace process and Jordan's positions.

Mr. Kabariti was speaking two days after the U.S. Senate adopted a budget cut proposal that included a bill that abolishes Jordan of all of its official debts to the United States. This would mean writing off nearly \$500 million with an expenditure of about \$275 million.

The full Senate bill, approved 99 to nil, will have to be reconciled with a similar House of Representatives bill after the U.S. Congress resumes sessions after a two-week recess.

Mr. Kabariti, who accompanied the King to the Washington meetings and returned home Saturday, said that President Bill Clinton and senior administration officials as well as American congressmen showed "very good understanding of Jordan's economic and security needs."

"On the whole the outcome of the meetings were very, very positive," said the foreign minister.

First and foremost, the King's visit to Washington "was a very good opportunity to familiarise many new members of Congress of the realities in the Middle East and Jordan's key role in the peace process," Mr. Kabariti told the Jordan Times.

New members of the American legislature "heard first-hand from His Majesty on the Middle East peace process and also on Jordan's commitment to a comprehensive peace in the region as

well as the Kingdom's efforts," Mr. Kabariti said.

As a result, he added, "they expressed a better and serious understanding of the situation in the Middle East and also of Jordan's position."

Translated into action, this would mean congressional support for the administration's moves to assist Jordan in meeting its economic and security needs as well as positive backing for the Kingdom's political moves in the regional and international scenes.

Mr. Kabariti said it was too early to discuss the specifics of expected American assistance to Jordan, noting the preoccupation with securing debt relief for the Kingdom.

The Senate bill adopted on Friday appeared to be an additional measure that would ensure the full cancellation of Jordan's debts after a complex manoeuvring through the American constitutional process.

After the House Representatives slashed to \$50 million an administration request for \$275 million to be used to relieve Jordan of its debt, the administration moved the Senate to approve the full allocation as part of a Department of Defence budget supplemental.

The move was approved by the Senate, but had to be reconciled with its House of Representatives version in a joint session of key members of the two chambers of the legislatures.

The joint session, known as a conference, was expected to take place last week, but was deferred until after the legislature's recess.

Despite the complex technicalities of the procedures, Mr. Kabariti said, "we were assured that the full debt relief will come after the re-



Shimon Shamir
Israeli envoy presents credentials

By Ghader Taher
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — Foreign Minister Abdul Karim Kabariti Sunday received Israeli Ambassador Shimon Shamir, who handed him a copy of his credentials as Israel's first ambassador to Jordan.

Dr. Shamir, who arrived Thursday to take up his post, will present his credentials to His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan, the Regent, today.

Mr. Kabariti, who met with Dr. Shamir for nearly 40 minutes, said he told the Israeli envoy that while Jordan was committed to advancing peace between the two states, it was concerned with the need for a just settlement to all aspects of the Arab-Israeli conflict.

The minister told the Jordan Times that "normal relations" between the two states "are directly and naturally linked to Jordan's interests."

He pointed out that "in order to give content to the concept of a comprehensive peace, we must deal with all

(Continued on page 7)

No date for Iraq pullout — Inonu

SAINT MAXIME, France (Agencies) — Turkish Foreign Minister Erdal Inonu refused Sunday to give a date for when Turkish troops pursuing Kurdish rebels in northern Iraq would be withdrawn.

Speaking at a press conference after a meeting here with French counterpart Alain Juppe, he said a withdrawal date would only be known "when the operation (against the Kurds) is finished."

Mr. Inonu, who was at an informal discussion forum in this southern French town with the aim of promoting cooperation among 11 Mediterranean countries, added that the "Turkish military operations had 'an objective and limited length.'"

"I told Mr. Juppe I had no date I could give him on a withdrawal because that will be seen to when the operation is finished and the mission which our security forces are carrying out has been accomplished," he said.

He said Ankara was concentrating on that "essential objective."

Mr. Juppe said he told Mr.

Inonu that France wanted "to know a date for Turkey's withdrawal as quickly as possible," adding he hoped that it "would be arranged as soon as possible."

Mr. Juppe said Mr. Inonu had assured him that "that was also Turkey's intention."

Ankara sent some 35,000 troops into northern Iraq on March 20, saying the Kurdish Labour Party (PKK) was using it as a base for armed attacks in Turkey.

Ankara, meanwhile prepared to receive a U.S. envoy, and two rival Iraqi Kurdish factions agreed to a ceasefire on Sunday — both steps that could hasten an end to Turkey's much-criticised military sweep into Iraq.

U.S. Deputy Secretary of State Strobe Talbott arrives in Ankara on Monday for a three-day visit amid growing unease in Washington over the uncertain length of the Turkish push against PKK rebels and reported civilian casualties.

Two long-feuding Iraqi Kurdish militias — the Pat-

(Continued on page 7)

Ross briefs Mubarak on Syria-Israel talks

CAIRO (Agencies) — U.S. envoy Dennis Ross briefed President Hosni Mubarak on Sunday about his talks in Syria and Israel, where he tried to convince the two countries to dispatch their military chiefs for further negotiations.

Mr. Ross, the State Department's Middle East coordinator, refused to speak with reporters after the session on whether there was progress in his meetings Saturday with Syrian President Hafez Al Assad and Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin.

Egypt's Al-Ahram daily reported Sunday that Israel has agreed to shorten the timetable for withdrawing its troops from the Golan Heights.

But Osama Al-Baz, head of Mr. Mubarak's political office, denied the newspaper report. "It is not true that they have reached agreement on a timetable for the withdrawal," he said.

The paper quoted unnamed sources in the Syrian capital as saying: "An agreement has been reached that the withdrawal will be done

within a period of 18 months."

The paper noted that Israel previously had insisted on a four-year to seven-year withdrawal schedule.

Mr. Ross met Mr. Mubarak in the Suez Canal city of Ismailia, 100 kilometres northeast of Cairo. After the meeting, Mr. Ross flew to Israel. He is due in Amman on Monday.

Mr. Mubarak, who is expected to travel to Syria soon, reportedly requested the meeting with Mr. Ross, diplomats here said. Mr. Mubarak returned from Washington last week after conferring with U.S. President Bill Clinton on the Middle East peace process.

Israel's chief negotiator with Syria said that a demand by Damascus for equal security arrangements on both sides of the two foes' border was holding up the peace moves.

Itamar Rabinovich, who is also Israel's ambassador to Washington, said:

"We are still, as far as the Syrians are concerned, en-

(Continued on page 7)

Iraq assails Turkey for dealing with Kurds

BAGHDAD (Agencies) — Iraq has assailed Turkey for announcing it would entrust the security of the northern Iraqi border area to Iraqi Kurd leaders.

It also accused Turkey of violating human rights with its military operation against Turkish Kurd separatists in northern Iraq, and blamed Ankara for the deaths of Iraqi Kurd civilians during the intervention.

A Foreign Ministry spokesman quoted by the official INA news agency condemned a meeting this week between a Turkish government delegation and "certain Iraqi Kurd traitors with the goal of achieving cooperation with the Turkish army of invasion and ensuring the security of the border."

After that meeting Thursday Turkey said it would entrust the security of its border with Iraq to Iraqi Kurd groups after the Turkish army had withdrawn its troops from northern Iraq. Iraqi Kurds have controlled the north of Iraq since the end of the 1991 Gulf war, in defiance of Baghdad and with the backing of a U.S.-led allied force based in south-east Turkey that patrols the skies of northern Iraq.

A Turkish government spokesman said Friday that the army would pull out of northern Iraq within weeks, the first time Ankara has given a time-scale for the incursion which has come under mounting international criticism.

The Iraqi spokesman reiterated Baghdad's condemnation of the March 20 invasion of northern Iraq by 35,000 troops, backed by armour and air strikes, to crush the Kurdish Labour Party (PKK).

It has been fighting the Ankara government for a separate Kurdish state since 1984 and has bases in Iraqi Kurdistan.

Saturday's statement was much more harshly worded than Baghdad's initial denunciation of the Turkish incursion, the largest military operation since it invaded Cyprus in 1974.

The Turkish incursion, it said, "forms a flagrant violation of Iraq's sovereignty and to the principles of the United Nations Charter" and Baghdad "rejects any justifications or pretexts" cited by Ankara for the military action.

Baghdad, it added, "accuses Turkey of aggression against Iraq... and asks it to withdraw its forces immediately."

The new harshness in Baghdad's statements follows reports that the Turkish forces have killed several Iraqi Kurd civilians in their sweep against the elusive PKK fighters.

But it appears that Baghdad has been particularly incensed by Ankara's dispatch of a team of diplomats to northern Iraq to meet with the leaders of the main Iraqi Kurd factions, the Kurdistan Democratic Party and the Patriotic Union of Kurdistan, to persuade them to stop sheltering the PKK.

The Turks also want the two factions, traditional rivals who have been feuding for the last 11 months, to agree to a settlement to end the chaos in the self-rule zone which the Kurds believe the PKK has been exploiting.

Ending the internecine fighting between the rebel factions in Kurdistan is not something Baghdad wants, since it weakens them.

The Iraqi Foreign Ministry official denounced the envoys' contacts with "these outlaw gangs" and said this recognition of them will "encourage them to continue their criminal schemes against the legitimate authority" in Baghdad.

Andreotti visits Gaza

GAZA CITY (AP) — Former Italian Premier Giulio Andreotti met with Palestinian Liberation Organisation (PLO) Chairman Yasser Arafat in the Gaza Strip Saturday and gave his full backing for Middle East peace.

Mr. Andreotti, Italy's seven-time premier who was indicted last month on charges of having ties with the mafia, also urged Palestinians and Israelis to be good neighbours.

Mr. Andreotti, 76, said his trip to the Gaza Strip and the West Bank town of Jericho Saturday was aimed at familiarising himself with the problems the Palestinians were facing.

"As an old friend of Mr. Arafat, I accepted his invitation to understand the problems the Palestinians suffer from and to continue supporting the peace process through my contacts and abilities," Mr. Andreotti told reporters after a one-hour meeting with Mr. Arafat.

He later visited Mr. Arafat's five-month pregnant wife, Suha, before joining the Palestinian leader for dinner.

Mr. Andreotti, a senator-for-life, has said his visit was also in part tied to his position as managing editor of the Italian religious affairs magazine "30 Giorni" (30-days).

Mr. Andreotti, the most senior political figure to face mafia charges, was due to meet with top Israeli officials Sunday.

Mr. Andreotti began his day with a stop in Jericho,

where he met with Jibril Rajoub, commander of preventive security, and Sheikh Rajai Abda, head of the Centre for Islamic Studies, who received him at the dusty Hisham Palace hotel.

After the meetings, he called on Israeli and Palestinian to "live in peace like good neighbours," saying both people have suffered a lot.

In the Gaza Strip, Mr. Andreotti toured an Italian-funded citrus processing plant that Mr. Arafat inaugurated last July. It is the only Palestinian juice factory and the most modern plant in the strip.

After watching oranges roll down from a large silo onto a conveyor belt to be washed and then squeezed, Mr. Andreotti said he was "very happy" to see the factory functioning after so many delays.

The plant was supposed to begin operations last December. But the Palestinians could not raise enough money for running costs.

The Palestinian National Authority provided the plant with \$2 million and it has been producing 20-25 tonnes of orange concentrate since last month.

Mr. Andreotti, whose country donated \$10 million for the project, promised the factory's board members to push the Italian government to provide the plant with an additional \$1 million to add a new production line for making tomato juice.



A Palestinian family in the Shatila refugee camp in Beirut (AFP photo)

Palestinian refugees battle against hardship in Lebanon

BEIRUT (AFP) — Omm Hisham, a Palestinian widow, has abandoned her dreams of returning to Palestine as she struggles to raise eight children with \$50 a month in Shatila, one of Lebanon's 12 squalid refugee camps.

Like most of the 300,000 Palestinian refugees in Lebanon, half of whom live in camps, she is shunned as a pariah in the country where she has lived for nearly 50 years since leaving Palestine.

Ignored by the Israeli-Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) autonomy accords, the refugees have been largely forced to fend for themselves since the PLO and the U.N. relief agency UNRWA slashed aid programmes.

"Our world is collapsing," said Loufeyeh, a divorced woman of 50. "We are neither Palestinian nor Lebanese. We are victims being given small, regular doses of morphine."

Pent-up anguish, broken dreams, stories of death, sickness, unpaid bills, hand-me-down clothes and hunger fill the homes tightly packed together in Lebanon's refugee camps. The labyrinthine alleys become a sea of mud and litter when it rains.

The search for a political solution between Israel and the Palestinians does not rank high among their concerns.

"A practical solution to my problems would be for God to send husbands for my six daughters," said Omm Hisham, who lost her husband, a Palestinian guerrilla, in an Israeli air raid 12 years ago.

The presence of armed Palestinian guerrillas who roamed freely round the country is seen as the main trigger of the 15-year civil war which erupted on April 13, 1975.

Since Israel invaded Lebanon in 1982, crushing the PLO's "state-within-a-state" conditions for the Palestinian refugees have gone from bad to worse.

After Palestinian self-rule was launched in May 1994, the PLO froze all its humanitarian aid programmes in Lebanon while UNRWA drastically reduced its assistance in the housing, education and health sectors.

Some 100,000 desperate

Palestinians have emigrated since the 1982 Israeli invasion. Most of them left after the massacres the same year in the Sabra and Shatila camps.

For Ramia Abbas, who lives in three humid rooms along with 12 members of her family, it is a question either of resettlement in Lebanon or obtaining Lebanese nationality to secure her civilian and political rights.

In the past year, 15,000 others have done what was previously unthinkable: asked for and got Lebanese nationality.

But Lebanon has adamantly refused to resettle the Palestinians, most of whom are Sunni Muslims, and in the past year it has tightened the noose in a bid to drive more of them out of the country.

As Lebanon forges ahead with multi-billion-dollar reconstruction projects tens of thousands of Palestinians are threatened with expulsion from their breeze-block and corrugated iron homes in the camps to make room for a railroad, luxury hotel, highways and a sports complex.

Building permits in the camps are now systematically refused and rules banning Palestinians from 60 professions, including medicine, law, plumbing and carpentry, are being enforced.

In the past two weeks, the Lebanese authorities have shut down 11 clinics run by Palestinian doctors. Pharmacies run by Palestinians have been told they should cease business," said a Palestinian official, Suhail Natur.

According to Walid Junblatt, the minister responsible for Lebanese people displaced in the 1975-1990 civil war, the Palestinians are "the pariahs of the earth."

"If some Lebanese could throw them into the sea they would not hesitate," he said.

But privately Lebanese and Palestinian officials agree that the only possible solution is resettlement, based on a formula which would not upset the fragile Christian-Muslim balance in Lebanon.

"I was born here, raised here and went to school here," said Fatmeeh, 16. "All I ask is to be able to make my home here and be part of this society."

Britain seeks deals with the United Arab Emirates (UAE) and Qatar to seal defence pacts that could involve protection and arms sales, a British minister said on Monday.

Minister of State for Defence Procurement, Roger Freeman, said the treaty with Qatar could be ready for signing within two months while he would visit Abu Dhabi again to conclude a defence agreement.

"The defence agreement with Qatar would cover training on weapons, joint military exercises and means of extending support to Qatar in appropriate times," Freeman told the London-based Arabic daily Al Hayat.

"I hope we will finalise the agreement within the next

two months so it will be finally signed in London or Doha."

Mr. Freeman discussed the pacts during a Gulf tour last month, when he also visited Abu Dhabi to push for the sale of helicopters and frigates for the UAE armed forces.

But Britain's Westland Helicopters and the U.S. Sikorsky lost out to the French-German Eurocopter in a deal to supply the emirates with six anti-submarine Panther helicopters.

Britain is still competing for a contract to sell frigates to the UAE worth more than \$1 billion. The other four competitors are shipbuilding firms from the United States, Germany, France and the Netherlands.

Mr. Freeman said he was disappointed at the loss of the helicopter deal, blaming what he called differences on prices.

He did not elaborate but the value of the helicopter deal was re-negotiated minutes before it was announced at the March 19-23 defence show. A handwritten modification in the statement distributed to reporters showed Eurocopter cut the price from around \$251 million to \$235 million.

He said he was too old in 1914 to serve in the Ottoman Turkish army.

He proudly related how he held off single-handed an Ottoman patrol in Qenia, five kilometres from the Lebanese-Syrian border.

"The next day a big force came to arrest me and took me to the court in Tripoli. The judge asked me: where are your men? I told him I was alone, even if the patrol thought they were up against several people. Since then I have been nicknamed 'Ali the Men,'" he chuckled, with a toothless grin.

Harba Adra, 105, said Ali used to carry her into the fields on his shoulders when she was five.

"He can't hear very well and doesn't recite poetry any

more, but don't poke fun at him — he used to be a tough guy and wasn't called 'Ali the Men' for nothing," she said.

Ali's humble one-room house is built with stones from ancient ruined Roman temples, like most of the homes in Qenia, 60 kilometres east of Tripoli.

He rose from his mattress on the floor every 15 minutes, shuffling over to the door "to see the sun."

Pointing to a tree trunk which supports the thatched roof he said: "I carried this huge stake on my shoulders through the mountains on foot, from Aandeq, 15 kilometres from here — I used to be young and strong."

He complained of stomach cramps, but his wife Anne said she cannot remember him ever having been ill before.

"He only went to see an optician who prescribed these thick glasses for him," she said.

"Ali has spent a lifetime in the fields with his animals. He refuses to eat preserved foods and tells off his children and grandchildren, numbering about 100, if they eat eggs from industrial farms."

NEWS IN BRIEF

Cypriot police baffled by woman in cave

NICOSIA (AP) — Cypriot police were baffled by a foreign woman found unconscious in a cave and said Sunday they were seeking help from Interpol in identifying her. The middle-aged woman was discovered Thursday by a shepherd in the Akamas Peninsula forest on a remote part of the island, a popular tourist resort. A police statement said she was immediately taken to hospital and remained in a semi-coma until Saturday, when she told doctors in sign language that she was deaf and mute and had come to the island as an illegal immigrant. The statement said the woman claimed she was Israeli and drew pictures of a boat and the sea for a psychiatrist. However, the police statement said a hotel receptionist and a supermarket cashier recognised the woman from newspaper photographs. They said she had been speaking English. The cashier from the village of Kouklia, about 40 kilometres south of Akamas, said the woman bought oranges from the store last month. Several oranges and a receipt from the Kouklia supermarket were also found in the cave, police said. Police did not say how long she had been unconscious before being discovered. Earlier newspaper reports identified the woman as an English teacher at a local school who was presumed missing. However, the reports were discarded when the teacher returned from a vacation abroad.

Iraq to hand over prisoners to Sudan

KHARTOUM (R) — Iraq will hand over 24 Sudanese prisoners to Sudan soon and is prepared to hand over up to 150, a Sudanese newspaper reported on Sunday. The state-owned Al Ingaz Al Watani quoted remarks by Iraqi Justice Minister Shabbab Al Maliki as he ended a four-day visit to Sudan. Mr. Maliki said Iraq had completed preparations to hand over 24 Sudanese prisoners and another 14 had already been freed. A total of 150 cases could be considered, the newspaper said, quoting Mr. Maliki as saying the prisoners were convicted of ordinary crimes. It was not clear how long they had been in Iraqi jails. During his visit, the two countries agreed to cooperate in the field of legal training. Tens of thousands of Sudanese worked in Iraq in the 1980s, and some volunteered to fight in the Iraqi army in its 1980-88 war against Iran.

Ethiopian diplomat kidnapped in Mogadishu

MOGADISHU (AFP) — Ethiopian Charge d'Affaires in Mogadishu Yaman Abdou was kidnapped by unknown gunmen from his residence in south Mogadishu on Sunday, a watchman at the residence said here. The watchman told journalists that before the kidnap, three elders had called at Mr. Yaman's residence and argued with him about something he did not understand, but soon after they had left, the gunmen went into the house and took the diplomat away. The reason for the kidnapping remained unknown, although some reports here claim that the gunmen wanted compensation for a lorry loaded with an assortment of goods that had been looted in the Nagale region of Ethiopia. Mr. Yaman, who has been in Ethiopia for the last two years, is among very few foreign diplomats still remaining in the country and the first to be kidnapped since the United Nations pulled out of the war-torn Horn of Africa country at the beginning of March. It is not known where Mr. Yaman was taken after the kidnap, as no organisation or clan faction had so far claimed responsibility. The Ethiopian ambassador to Somalia, Lisana Yohan, who is currently mediating between warring Somali factions, is currently in Addis Ababa after he accompanied Ethiopian delegates who visited Somalia last month.

Lebanon's oldest man takes pride in tough-guy image

QENIA (AFP) — Lebanon's oldest man, Ali Mohammad Hussein, still takes pride in his reputation for toughness in this northern village where his age is put at 133.

The birthdate on his identity papers is clearly marked as 1862. However, it was only registered in 1932 under the French mandate, so his exact age is still open to question.

"He is older than my father, who would have been 130 if he was still alive," said Mariam Issa, 95.

Ali said he was too old in 1914 to serve in the Ottoman Turkish army.

He proudly related how he held off single-handed an Ottoman patrol in Qenia, five kilometres from the Lebanese-Syrian border.

"The next day a big force came to arrest me and took me to the court in Tripoli. The judge asked me: where are your men? I told him I was alone, even if the patrol thought they were up against several people. Since then I have been nicknamed 'Ali the Men,'" he chuckled, with a toothless grin.

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JORDAN TIMES DAILY GUIDE AND CALENDAR

JORDAN TELEVISION	
Tel: 723111-19	
PROGRAMME TWO	
14:00	Madeline
14:30	Munster's Day
15:00	Hard Time on Planet Earth
16:30	Toranzo
17:00	Le Prince Et La Sirène
17:30	Film: "Félice A Les Yux Beus"
19:00	News in French
19:15	Varieties
19:30	The Bold and the Beautiful
20:00	Voyager
20:30	Laure Hill
21:00	South Beach
22:00	News in English
22:30	Feature film: "Getting Guiti"
00:59	The Hidden Room
01:30	Grace and Favour
PRAYER TIMES	
04:49	Fajr
12:37	Dhuhr
17:12	Asr
20:05	Maghrib
21:25	Isha
CHURCHES	
St. Mary of Nazareth Church, Sweith, Tel. 810740	
Assemblies of God Church, Tel. 632785	
St. Joseph Church Tel. 624590	
Church of the Annunciation Tel. 637440	
De la Salle Church Tel. 601757	
Terrasanta Church Tel. 623366	
Church of the Annunciation Tel. 625541	
Anglican Church Tel. 630851, Tel. 628543	
Armenian Catholic Church Tel. 717331	
Armenian Orthodox Church Tel. 717331	
St. Ephraim Church Tel. 717751	
Armenian International Church Tel. 625526	
Evangelical Lutheran Church Tel. 623326	
German-speaking Evangelical Congregation Tel. 604195	
The Latter-Day Saints Tel. 654932	
Church of Nazareth Tel. 625991	
The Evangelical Local Church in Amman Tel. 811295	
WEATHER	
Bulkin supplied by the Department of Meteorology.	
Temperatures are expected to drop with scattered showers in the northern and central parts of the Kingdom. Clouds will build up at different altitudes and winds becoming southerly active. In Aqaba, skies will be partly cloudy, wind southerly active and seas rough.	
Min./Max. temp. Amman 11/18	

ZARQA:	
Dr. Samir Al Lawzi	(—)
Khalifeh pharmacy	985417
EMERGENCIES	
Food Control Centre	637111
Civil Defence Department	661111
Rescue	630341
Civil Defence Emergency	199
Fire Brigade	192.621111, 637777
Blood Bank	617101
Highway Police	634342
Traffic Police	896390
Public Security Department	630321
Hotel Complaints	616580
Price Complaints	661176
Water and Sewerage	(—)
Complaints	897467
Amman Municipality	(—)
Complaints	787111
Telephone Information (directory assistance)	773111
Overseas Calls	010231
Central Amman Telephone	(—)
Repairs	623101
Abdali Telephone Repairs	661101
Jordan Television	773111
Radio Jordan	774111
Water Authority	890310
Jordan Electricity Authority	815615
USEFUL TELEPHONE NUMBERS	
NIGHT DUTY	
AMMAN:	
Dr. Bassim Qaddumi	648633
Dr. Yousef Al Fajih	756988
Dr. Fakhri Tayeh	885880
Dr. Yousef Abdo	694916
Firas pharmacy	661912
Ferdous pharmacy	774336
Al Asma pharmacy	637155
Nairokh pharmacy	623672
Al Salam pharmacy	636730
Yacoub pharmacy	644945
Shaniciani pharmacy	637669
Nairokh pharmacy	623672
Najih pharmacy	847632
IRBID:	
Dr. Ali Al Omani	272032
Alqish pharmacy	(—)
HOSPITALS	
AMMAN:	
Husseini Medical Centre	813813/2
Khalidi Maternity, J. Amn	642816
ZARQA:	
Al-Ahli, Abdali	642342
Mallias, J. Amman	636140
Palestine, Shmeisani	664174
Shmeisani Hospital	669131
University Hospital	845845
Al-Musasher Hospital	6672279
The Islamic, Abdali	666127/37
Al-Ahli, Abdali	6641646
Italian, Al-Muhajreen	777101/3
Al-Bashir, J. Ashrafieh	775111/26
Army, Marfa	891611/5
Oueca Al-Hospital	662240/55
Amal Hospital	674155
The Arab Centre for Heart and Special Surgery	865199
ZARQA:	
Zarqa Govt. Hospital	(09)983323
Zarqa National Hospital	(09)983323
DHAHRAH:	
Dr. Sina Hospital	(09)983323
Al Hikma Modern Hospital	(09)983323
FOR THE TRAVELLER	
QUEEN ALIA INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT	
This information is supplied by Royal Jordanian (RJ) information department at the Queen Alia International Airport Tel. (09)533315, where it should always be verified.	
ARRIVALS	
Royal Jordanian (RJ) Flights (Terminal 1)	
08:20	Sanaa (RJ)
09:35	Jeddah (RJ)
10:00	Damascus (RJ)
10:30	Dhahran (RJ)
10:40	New Delhi (RJ)
10:55	Dubai, Abu Dhabi (RJ)
11:15	Aqaba (RJ)
Other Flights (Terminal 2)	
06:00	Istanbul (TK)
07:30	Rome (AZ)
09:30	Beirut (ME)
11:00	Khartoum (SD)
11:30	Cairo (MS)
14:30	Bahrain, Abu Dhabi, Muscat (GF)
16:30	Kiev (6U)
DEPARTURES	
Royal Jordanian (RJ) Flights (Terminal 1)	
08:45	Beirut (RJ)
09:00	Aqaba (RJ)
12:15	Amsterdam, Chicago (RJ)
13:00	London (RJ)
13:30	Frankfurt (RJ)
13:45	Cairo (RJ)

Regent confers Istiklal medal on pioneering women

AMMAN (Petra) — Their Royal Highnesses Prince Hassan, the Regent, and Princess Sarvath on Sunday conferred the Istiklal Medal of the Third Order on members of the society of Al Malath (shelter) Foundation for Humanitarian Care.

Prince Hassan conferred upon Foundation President Sawwan Majali Al Istiklal Medal of the Third Order.

The Regent was briefed by Dr. Majali and members on the goals of the foundation which was established in 1992 to offer care and comfort to patients suffering from serious diseases and advice and counselling to the families of these patients.

Prince Hassan commended the foundation's voluntary work which he said, relieves the pain of many patients who are suffering from cancer and other serious diseases.



His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan, the Regent, on Sunday confers the Al Istiklal Medal of the Third Order upon Sawwan Majali, president of the Al Malath Foundation for Humanitarian Care (Petra photo)

The Crown Prince and Princess Sarvath also voiced appreciation of such philanthropic work and said such deeds reflect the mandate of Jordan's medical, humanitarian and voluntary sectors and the successes they have achieved in voluntary fields in the society as a whole.

The Regent said the foundation's activities aim to alleviate the suffering of those afflicted with serious diseases through relieving their pain and offering treatment to them and to their relatives.

This, he said, revives a traditional and cultural way of life which prevailed in the Jordanian society at one time, when the society was characterised with integration and affection.

He said Al Malath foundation, in which 40 doctors, nurses, social workers and other specialists are working, represents all these values.

"Al Malath (shelter) is the place where someone finds care and concern after the long journey of life," Prince Hassan explained.

The Regent and Princess

Sarvath reiterated their continued support for this great humanitarian effort and pledged to continue backing and disseminating such creative ideas which reflect the integration of the Jordanian society.

Prince Hassan also commended Dr. Majali's efforts saying they have become a living example of the achievements of Jordanian women.

Dr. Majali convened the first seminar on women's rights in Jordan in 1976 upon directives by the Crown Prince.

Prince Hassan also received at the Royal Court Sunday Professor Seteney Shami of the Yarmouk University's Department of Archaeology and Anthropology.

Prince Hassan conferred upon her the Istiklal Medal of the First Order in appreciation of her contributions and studies in fields of anthropology and to thank her for presenting a scientific research on migration and refugees in the new world order at the British University of Oxford.

Kingdom, PNA seek agreement on cooperation in sports

By a Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — The Jordanian government and the Palestinian National Authority (PNA) are seeking an agreement on cooperation in sports affairs under which the Kingdom will also extend expertise to the PNA to develop sports facilities and training, officials said Sunday.

The officials were commenting on a visit to Jordan by Azzam Shuaibi, the minister of youth in the PNA-based in Gaza, who arrived here on a four-day visit leading a delegation from his ministry for talks with Jordanian officials.

The sought-for agreement will be part of a broad accord on Jordanian-Palestinian cooperation signed by Prime

Minister Sharif Zeid Ben Shaker and Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) Chairman Yasser Arafat in Amman in January.

The Jordanian government and the PNA cabinet have endorsed the Jan. 26 agreement.

Mr. Shuaibi, who arrived here across the King Hussein Bridge, was quoted as saying by the Jordan News Agency, Petra, that his visit to Jordan "falls within the framework of the (Jan. 26) agreement," which calls for separate accords on cooperation in various sectors.

The Palestinian minister was scheduled to meet with Minister of Youth Awarad Khleifat and other senior officials.

He was received upon arrival by the under-secretary of the Ministry of Youth,

Majed Qteishat, and other officials.

The delegation accompanying Mr. Shuaibi will also hold talks with officials from Jordanian sports clubs and related institutions with a view to arranging soccer teams from the two sides to play each other.

A committee is expected to be announced on Monday entrusted with drawing up a Jordan-PNA agreement on cooperation in sports.

The agreement would aim at exchanging delegations from both sides and organising Jordanian assistance to the PNA in building sports facilities and training for sports personnel.

The agreement could be signed on Wednesday subject to the approval of the ministers of the draft to be prepared by the committee.

Transport panel formed

The Jordanian government also Saturday formed a steering committee on transport, and named Director General of the Ports Corporation Duried Mahasneh as its chairman, Petra reported.

The committee will discuss transport issues with the PNA. The committee groups the directors general of the Civil Aviation Authority, Royal Jordanian, the Meteorology Department, the Customs Department, and the National Shipping Lines and the assistant director of the Public Security Department.

The government has also decided to form five sub-committees specialising in the various transport fields and entrusted the minister of transport to name their members.

Hit and run driver turns himself in

By Rana Hussein Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — A 30-year-old man who on Saturday struck and killed a three-year-old child while driving, then fled the scene in Zarqa, turned himself in Sunday, police said.

A police official told the Jordan Times that the suspect, who was not identified, walked in to the police station and confessed to running over Manal Nouri of Zarqa in his pick-up truck then fleeing the scene of the accident.

"Eyewitnesses gave us a

good description of the vehicle, and even if he had not turned himself in, we were going to find him," the official said.

According to the official, the suspect is in police custody and will be transferred to the court.

Also on Saturday, one person was killed and another was seriously injured in a tribal feud that involved more than 10 people in the Ramein area near Baqaa camp, police reports said.

According to the report, Awarad Ali, 60, was stabbed to death in the fight, and

Mohammad Awarad was listed in critical condition after being shot in the chest.

According to a police report, the incident was sparked by family problems.

"Shepherds of both clans started arguing about the area each party could graze its sheep in, and they all started fighting," the source said.

He added that families of both clans started fighting and Mohammad Awarad stabbed Awarad Ali and killed him. "During the fight, one of Mr. Ali's family had beat up Mr. Awarad's father and

mother and so Mr. Awarad decided to revenge by killing Mr. Ali," the source told the Jordan Times.

He added that in turn, one of the victim's family shot Mr. Awarad.

According to the source, most of the people involved in the fight are in police custody. Police declined comment on the incident.

Sources said that both victims were taken to King Hussein Medical Centre, while the remaining 10 involved in the fighting were taken to Salt Hospital and were listed in fair to good condition.

News in Brief

Omar Rifal appointed to additional post

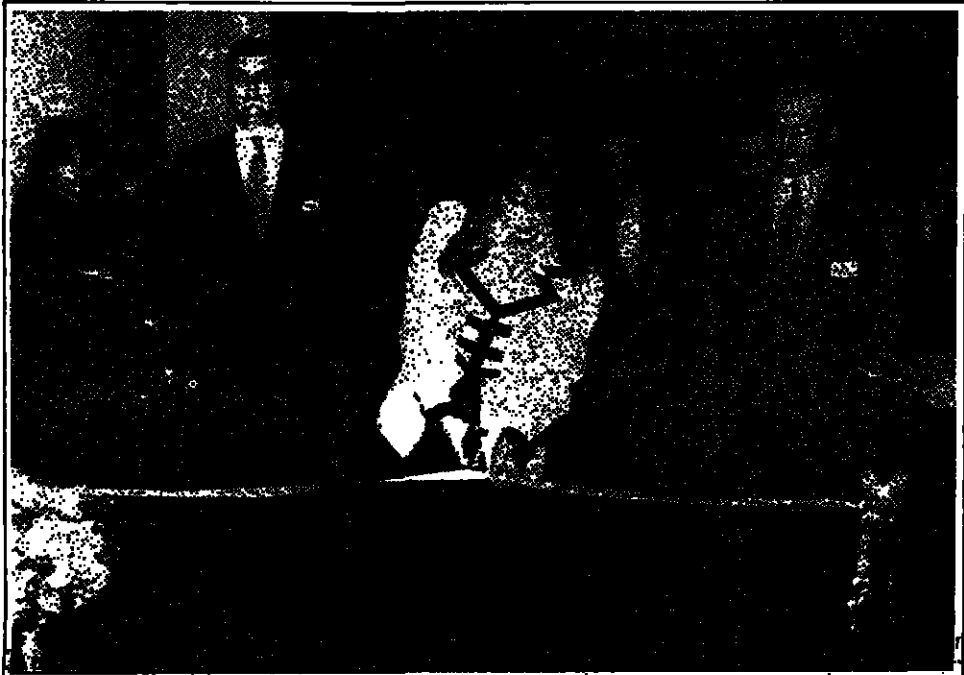
AMMAN (Petra) — The government Sunday appointed Omar Rifal, the current director of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs Special Bureau, to a second post as coordinator for peace process affairs at the ministry.

RJ, Gulf Air to increase flights

AMMAN (Petra) — Royal Jordanian (RJ) will increase its flights to Manama, Bahrain from three to five flights per week in accordance with the new civil aviation agreement signed between the two countries recently. The agreement also allows Gulf Air to operate five weekly flights to Amman. The new agreement replaces one signed between the two countries in 1974. According to the terms of the agreement, four air routes were added to those operated by the civil aviation authorities of the two countries. These included operating flights to Beijing, Hanoi and two cities in South Africa.

Jordanian industries to exhibit products in Bahrain

AMMAN (Petra) — A total of 40 Jordanian industrial companies will take part in the first Jordanian exhibition to be held in Bahrain, from April 17 through April 21, according to Bashir Najjar, director general of the company organising the exhibition. The exhibition will be opened by Minister of Industry and Trade Ali Abul Ragheb and his Bahraini counterpart Habib Ahmad Qassem.



EXHIBITION: Her Royal Highness Princess Brides Beg. The three-day exhibition includes Kainia Al Abdullah on Sunday opens at the 'Wedding gowns, flowers and other items needed Marriott Hotel an exhibition entitled the for weddings (Petra photo)

Jordan joins ship classifying panel

AMMAN (Petra) — Minister of Transport Samir Kassar Sunday said Jordan has joined the recently established Arab League commission for classifying ships because the commission opens new scopes in maritime transport and ship manufacturing and production.

In an interview with the Jordan News Agency, Petra, Mr. Kassar said the commission aims to enhance joint Arab action and the Arab countries' role in maritime

transport and reduce the costs off classification and inspection of ships incurred by Arab countries.

The commission, he said, will also extend technical support for industries involved in ship-manufacturing in Arab countries.

He said the commission's charter had established the duties of the commission to include preparing the technical terms and conditions for building and designing ships and offering technical super-

vision on the process of ship building and repairing in accordance with international standards and specifications.

He said it also set the terms for conducting periodic and emergency tests of the ships and their machines.

The minister said the agreement became active after five Arab countries have approved it.

A Royal Decree was issued recently endorsing Jordan's joining the commission's agreement.

Dentists to hold annual conference

AMMAN (Petra) — A four-day dentistry conference will be held here Tuesday, according to President of the Jordan Dental Association (JDA) Said Abu Meisar.

The conference will discuss 114 research papers covering various dental specialisations, including tooth transplant, tooth correction, dentures, dental and mouth diseases, gum diseases, as well as X-ray applications.

Taking part in the confer-

ence will be 1,000 dentists and professors of dentistry from 24 countries, including 18 Arab countries.

Dr. Abu Meisar said refresher courses on teeth correction, tooth transplant, gum disease and gum surgery, among other subjects will be held on the sidelines of the conference.

The conference also includes six symposia covering the above issues, Dr. Abu Meisar said.

A medical equipment exhibition will also be held on the sidelines of the conference.

The exhibition will include the latest dental equipment, tools and drugs.

The conference's objectives, Dr. Abu Meisar said, will serve as an opportunity for Jordanian, Arab and foreign dentists to exchange expertise and review the latest developments in dentistry.

Cold front expected — officials

By Sa'eda Kilani Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN (Petra) — The Department of Meteorology predicts that Khamasini weather conditions will end Monday as a result of a cold front which is expected to start affecting Jordan Monday day.

The department said it expected a drop in temperatures as a result of the front, and that clouds will appear at various altitudes.

It said there was a chance of scattered showers, especially in the northern and central parts of Jordan.

The department forecast another drop in temperatures on Tuesday and said a relatively cloudy day could be expected, with a chance of scattered showers still remaining.

On Wednesday, the weather is expected to stabilise but with temperatures still below the annual average.

The maximum temperature expected in Amman on Monday was 18°C, in Aqaba 26°C, desert areas 21°C and the Jordan Valley 25°C.

UNRWA celebrates World Health Day

AMMAN (J.T.) — Director of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency (UNRWA) Affairs, Ele Saaf called for enhancing cooperation between the departments of health and education at the agency to achieve the desired objectives of eliminating all kinds of diseases.

In a ceremony held at Al Wihdat Preparatory School for Girls on the occasion of World Health Day, Mr. Saaf said education and medicine are the basic curbs for combating epidemics.

Abdul Salam Abu Awad, director of the UNRWA Health Services Department stressed the importance of eradicating polio throughout the world. In a speech delivered on the occasion, Mr. Abu Awad pointed to the remarkable achievements in many countries that succeeded in combating polio.

"We should not miss the opportunity because the disease will make a come back and attack our children," Mr. Abu Awad said.

He urged parents and mothers to vaccinate their children against polio until it totally disappears as "was the case with measles," he said.

Awards were presented to 22 students from Amman, Irbid and Zarqa for their creative drawings on polio.

Opposition parties plan public rally against normalisation with Israel

By Sa'eda Kilani Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — Opposition parties are preparing for a major public conference at the end of this month to rally Jordanian and Arab support to combat all sorts of normalisation with Israel, party leaders said Sunday.

Eleven political parties will submit a memorandum today to the Ministry of Interior requesting permission to hold a public rally on April 27, according to Tayssir Zibri, secretary general of the Jordanian People's Democratic Party. Party sources said they expect at least 500 people to participate.

Opposition parties said they will also extend invitations to anti-normalisation committees in Syria, Leba-

non and Egypt to attend the first conference of its kind.

They will also inform all interested committees and parties in the Arab World, but said they cannot afford to extend invitations since their budget was limited.

The rally aims at adopting a unified stand among the opposition parties vis-a-vis Arab peace with Israel. All participating parties are expected to endorse a pan-Arab charter against normalisation.

According to party sources, the main guidelines of the charter call for the rejection of all sorts of relations with Israel that are based on the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO)-Israel accord reached in Oslo, Norway, and the Jordanian-Israeli peace treaty, signed last October.

"We will declare our rejection to the American submission policies and their attempts aimed at dominating the Arab and Islamic region," one party activist said.

The activist said the charter emphasises that the Zionist movement was a danger to the Arab nation, and that Israel was an occupying enemy.

In the cultural field, the charter calls for the rejection of and resistance to any amendment in school curricula; boycotting all seminars and conferences with Israel; and publicising against tourism activities with Israel.

In the economic field, the charter calls for boycotting all kinds of trade with Israel, including banking transactions.

The charter also calls for the rejection of the leasing of lands to Israel.

RSCN praises petroleum refinery for producing lead-free gasoline

AMMAN (Petra) — President of the Royal Society for the Conservation of Nature Anis Mouasher called for wider usage of the new, introduced lead-free gasoline in Jordan to help reduce pollution.

In an interview with the Jordan News Agency, Petra, Mr. Mouasher lauded the

Jordan Petroleum Refinery Company (JPRC) for the production of this gasoline and said it was a progressive step towards protecting nature and the environment.

He said lead-free gasoline, which is being sold at a limited number of gas stations, should be widely offered.

He said there were other

kinds of poisonous gasoline that should be banned because they have a negative effect on people's health.

Mr. Mouasher called on the concerned authorities to prohibit the importation of automobiles not equipped with an additional combustion device that reduces emissions pollution.

WHAT'S GOING ON

The following listings are compiled from monthly bulletins and the daily Arabic press. Readers are advised to verify the listed time and place with the concerned institutions.

FILMS

- ★ Film entitled "Un Coeur En Hiver" at the French Cultural Centre at 8:00 p.m.
- ★ Film entitled "Deprisa, Deprisa" at Instituto Cervantes (the Spanish Cultural Centre) at 6:00 p.m.

CONCERT

- ★ Concert by Wilham Quantet (including pieces by Suk, Smetana, and Dvorak) at the Royal Cultural Centre at 8:00 p.m.

LECTURE AND DIALOGUE

- ★ Lecture on enjoying literature by Dr. Nicholas Linfield at the British Council at 5:00 p.m.
- ★ Dialogue with Moroccan artist Farid Belkhaia at Darat Al Funnun at 6:00 p.m.

EXHIBITIONS

- ★ A collection of photos of Middle East doors by Julia

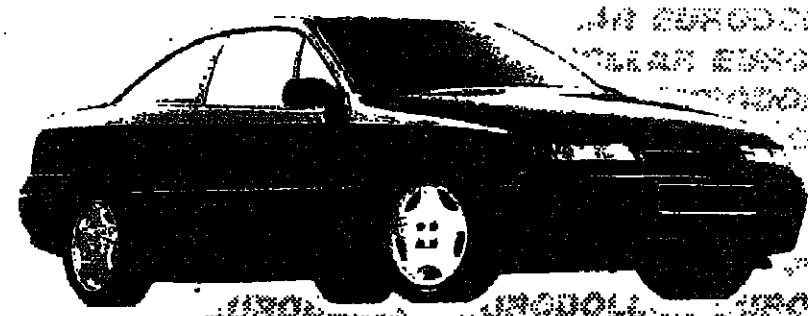
Reinholt at the Gallery, off the main lobby, Inter-Continental Hotel.

- ★ Exhibition of art by Moroccan artist Farid Belkhaia at Darat Al Funnun of the Abdul Hameed Shoman Foundation.
- ★ Exhibition of Palestinian embroidery at Goethe-Institut.
- ★ Exhibition of art by Yassin Atiyeh and Yassin Al Muhammadawi at Baladna Art Gallery.
- ★ Ceramics exhibition by artist Samer Al Khaffaji at Umm Uthaina Gallery.
- ★ Exhibition of art by William Golding at the British Council.
- ★ Exhibition of copper sculptures by Iraqi artist Mohammad Hussein Judi at the Phoenix Gallery for Culture and Art.
- ★ Exhibition of graphic works by Rafiq Lahham at Darat Al Funnun. Also displaying works by contemporary Arab artists.
- ★ Exhibition of art by Leo Rialp at Instituto Cervantes (the Spanish Cultural Centre).
- ★ Exhibition of prize-winning paintings by Czech students at the Royal Cultural Centre.
- ★ Exhibition of oil paintings by Hamoud Chantout at the Balqa' Art Gallery, Fuheis.

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Serbs shell Sarajevo as government celebrates

SARAJEVO (AFP) — Serb forces shelled downtown Sarajevo overnight in what was seen as a grim warning of things to come and Sarajevo Airport remained closed due to Serb refusal to guarantee the safety of landing aircraft.

Meanwhile, Bosnian troops were celebrating a victory in the centre of the country, against which Serbs were reportedly counter-attacking.

Some eight shells slammed into Sarajevo overnight, hitting a nearly-deserted marketplace and the vicinity of a U.N. compound in what was seen as a warning to both UNPROFOR and to the people of Sarajevo.

Damage was reported to be minimal. Only a couple of people were said to have been hurt and briefly treated at the hospital.

The nighttime attack followed a similar incident Thursday when several heavy mortar shells slammed into the old town, including one blasting an empty mosque courtyard.

Meanwhile, the airlift into the besieged capital remained suspended Sunday morning because of the Serbs' refusal "to guarantee the safety" of aircraft landing here, UNPROFOR spokeswoman Captain Myriam Sochacki said.

On Saturday, the Serbs had fired at a C-130 transport plane, operated by the U.N. High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), as it landed and again as it took off minutes later. The airport was closed for the day.

Ten rounds hit the plane, including the cockpit, and damaged its hydraulic system, but the aircraft was able to safely return to Ancona, Italy, the main base for the delivery of humanitarian aid here.

The incident occurred during an armed standoff between French U.N. and Serb soldiers at a checkpoint near the airport, later defused when both sides signed a document meant to clarify the situation for the passage between the U.N.-held air-

port and the city.

U.N. Protection Force (UNPROFOR) spokesman Major Herve Gourmelon Sunday reported low-level military activity in the vicinity of the central Vlasic Plateau, which Muslim-led government forces assaulted on March 20 and fully captured several days ago.

Bosnian television reported that both Prime Minister Haris Silajdzic and army chief General Rasim Delic had visited frontline troops on snow-covered Vlasic where pictures showed the government flag floating on a television relay station, apparently captured undamaged atop the 1,943-meter-high (6,412-foot) Mount Paljenik.

Sarajevo Radio said Serbs fired several hundred artillery and tank rounds Saturday at government lines on Vlasic.

Maj. Gourmelon spoke of an unconfirmed small-scale Serb counter-offensive in the area.

The local Bosnian com-

mander, General Mehmed Alagic, quoted by Sarajevo Radio, said the capture of the plateau was one of the army's greatest achievements to date and opened the way for further inroads into Serb-held territory to the west.

Military sources here suggested government troops might next target the nearby town of Jajce.

In the northeast, fighting continued near Tuzla for control of a second television and communications relay tower on the 900 metres high (3,000-foot) Stolice peak. Maj. Gourmelon said.

The Serbs have resorted to chemical weapons to repel Bosnian infantry assaults in the area, Bosnian and Western military sources said here Sunday.

The Serbs unleashed a CS-type gas attack in the area on Thursday night, incapacitating a number of government soldiers, a spokesman for the Bosnian army 2nd Corps said by telephone from Tuzla.

Relations on the line after Filipino commission says maid was innocent

MANILA (AFP) — Philippine-Singapore diplomatic ties hang in the balance after a presidential panel concluded that a Filipino maid may have been wrongly hanged in Singapore, analysts said Sunday.

The commission appointed by President Fidel Ramos called on the Singapore authorities to reinvestigate Flor Contemplacion's case.

Mr. Ramos now walked a political tightrope as he ponders whether to make good a threat to break diplomatic ties with Singapore.

There has been a national outcry over Contemplacion's hanging on March 17 for the murder of another maid and a four-year-old boy. Mr. Ramos said he would cut ties if the commission found there had been an injustice.

The president, who has already downgraded diplomatic ties, was given an advance copy of the report Thursday but has yet to comment on findings. The report said Contemplacion "appears to be mistakenly blamed and

hanged... apparently she is the victim of grave injustice."

A Singapore Foreign Ministry spokesman told AFP they have received a copy of the 79-page report and were preparing a response. The report also slammed the city-state for being uncaring and for sanctioning the use of torture to exact confessions.

The 42-year-old mother of four was convicted for the 1991 killings of Filipina maid Delia Maga and Maga's four-year-old Singaporean ward. Singapore rejected appeals to stay the execution to consider new evidence. This sparked angry protests in the Philippines, including the burning of Singapore's flag and the bombing of its airlines' office.

Many Filipinos were impressed by Mr. Ramos' brave words against Singapore, its second largest trading partner in South East Asia.

Others, however, remained sceptical, saying it was a ploy to deflect a savage backlash on the administra-

tion's candidates in the May 8 legislative elections.

Manila has been accused of failing to help Contemplacion and popularity surveys showed the candidates' winning chances have been affected by the anti-government sentiment.

University of the Philippines political scientist Francisco Nemenzo acknowledged that breaking ties with another country was difficult. But he told AFP by telephone that Mr. Ramos "made that promise to the world" and will "lose credibility" if he does not carry it out.

Philippine Justice Department pathologists in their autopsy concluded that Maga could have been killed by a stronger person. They also said she was severely beaten before being strangled as shown by cracks on his skull and some broken ribs.

Singapore has disputed the findings, stressing that the autopsy was done four years after Maga's death.

Sri Lanka issues shoot-to-kill orders ahead of fresh peace talks

COLOMBO (AFP) — Sri Lankan security forces were given shoot-to-kill orders after the murder of two soldiers, shattering a fragile truce ahead of Monday's peace talks, defence officials said Sunday.

Gunmen suspected of belonging to the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) shot the soldiers outside the key Pally military base in the northern Jaffna peninsula Saturday, officials said.

A Defence Ministry statement said investigations were proceeding and the military commanders were in contact with the local LTTE area leader identified as Selvarasa.

The ministry said that the LTTE had denied the killing.

Saturday's killings cannot be independently investigated because the Tigers have refused to recognise four truce monitoring committees, headed by foreign nationals, until all their economic demands are met.

It also reported that gunfire was heard in the eastern Ampara district Saturday and that the military had brought it to the notice of the Tigers. There were no reports of casualties in Ampara.

Officials said the two victims in Pally were the first army casualties since the Jan.

8 truce, aimed at clearing the way for a political settlement to the ethnic conflict which has claimed over 30,000 lives since 1972.

"We are now observing a red alert and all sentries have been asked to shoot anyone getting too close to our defence lines. For the soldier in the bunker it is a matter of kill or get killed," an army officer said.

The latest shooting came as the government prepared to send a delegation to the LTTE-held northern Jaffna town Monday to resume a peace process that has been tottering since their last face-to-face meet on Jan. 14.

Ministers rally round beleaguered Major

LONDON (R) — Ministers rallied round beleaguered Prime Minister John Major Sunday to stave off a leadership challenge after the ruling Conservatives were humiliated in Scottish local elections.

Just one Scottish voter in 10 supported the Conservatives in last Thursday's elections. Opinion polls point to another likely "wipe-out" for the badly divided party in next month's local council elections across England and Wales.

The Scottish rout prompted a flurry of media speculation about moves to oust Mr. Major, who took over in 1990 when the Conservatives dumped Margaret Thatcher as an electoral liability after a tumultuous decade in power.

The Observer said up to 33 Conservative members of parliament were ready to call for a leadership contest. Education Secretary Gillian Shephard was cited as a possible candidate by the Sunday Telegraph.

But Home Secretary Michael Howard, himself recovering from a bruising week at the hands of parliamentarians over law reforms, sought to quell any fevered leadership speculation.

"Three years ago today, the prime minister led us against all the odds to a (general) election victory that no one expected us to win," Home Secretary Michael Howard said.

per cent to Sen. Gramm.

A big unknown factor in the race, however, is California Governor Pete Wilson. He is a moderate Republican who is the chief executive of the most populous state which could tip the balance in the 1996 general election.

Mr. Wilson has said he is considering a run for the presidency, but has not formally announced.

The importance of California has been highlighted by Mr. Clinton's visit to the western state this weekend. Mr. Clinton and Vice President Al Gore are due to make another visit in less than a month.

Under the primary system, candidates win delegates from their parties in the preliminary voting round in each successive state. But next year, the contest will be much faster than in the past.

With California's primary set for March 26, the campaign will be decided in just over a month. So candidates will have to be well-organised and able to mount an effective campaign in states from New York to Florida to Texas almost simultaneously.

Other Republicans in the race include former Tennessee Governor Lamar Alexander, Pennsylvania Senator Arlen Specter, commentator Pat Buchanan and radio host Alan Keyes. Indiana Senator Richard Lugar is also mulling a presidential bid.

The Republicans are riding high as a result of their stunning rout of the Democratic Party in November 1994 congressional elections and are encouraged by what many



Pakistan's Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto arrives for a luncheon with U.N. Secretary General Boutros Ghali in New York. Ms. Bhutto is currently on a 10-day visit to the United States (AFP photo)

Bhutto warns of arms imbalance between Pakistan and India

PRINCETON, New Jersey (AP) — Asserting that India's weapons programme "threatens to start a proliferation race," Pakistan's Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto urged international talks to end the spread of weapons of mass destruction in South Asia.

In a speech Saturday at Princeton University, Ms. Bhutto said she called the "increasing imbalance in conventional weapons between Pakistan and India."

Portraying Pakistan as a

democratic Islamic country committed to constitutional rule and a free market, Ms. Bhutto said, "Pakistan is a force for moderation and stability in the Islamic World."

Ms. Bhutto was delivered her first public address since arriving in the United States Wednesday.

During her 10-day visit, Ms. Bhutto is seeking U.S. investment in Pakistan and the lifting of sanctions imposed in 1990 after the United States concluded Pakistan was operating a covert nuclear weapons programme.

After Ms. Bhutto met

Thursday with Senate majority leader Bob Dole, he said he was "impressed with her arguments."

President Bill Clinton, who is scheduled to meet Ms. Bhutto Tuesday in Washington, indicated the United States is ready to review the policy set out in a law authored by Sen. Larry Pressler in 1990 imposing sanctions against Pakistan.

Before speaking at Princeton, Ms. Bhutto met with U.N. Secretary General Boutros Ghali for about an hour in private in New York.

Kennedy would have pulled out of Vietnam—McNamara

NEW YORK (R) — Former U.S. Defence Secretary Robert McNamara said in an excerpt from an upcoming memoir that if former President John F. Kennedy had lived he would have pulled U.S. troops out of Vietnam and averted "a terrible price in blood."

In the excerpt, published in Newsweek's latest issue that will be on newsstands Monday, Mr. McNamara also blames himself and former top officials for "ill-founded" judgements about the war that he helped engineer and which claimed more than 58,000 American lives.

Mr. McNamara, a key architect of America's failed Vietnam War effort under Presidents Kennedy and Lyndon Johnson, has been virtually silent on the war for 25 years.

The excerpt from his book, *In Retrospect: The Tragedy and Lessons of Vietnam*, is the first time the former defence secretary has detailed what he considers the errors that led to U.S. involvement in the war.

"We of the Kennedy and Johnson administrations who participated in the decisions on Vietnam... were wrong, terribly wrong. We owe it to future generations to explain why," the book begins, according to the 6,000-word extract.

If Kennedy had lived, "he

would have pulled us out of Vietnam. He would have concluded that the South Vietnamese were incapable of defending themselves...."

Prevailing U.S. military opinion then was that the fall of South Vietnam to communism would lead to the fall of other U.S. allies in the region — the so-called "domino theory."

"Kennedy would have agreed that withdrawal would cause a fall of the dominoes but that staying in would ultimately lead to the same result, while exacting a terrible price in blood," Mr. McNamara said.

U.S. supply troops and military advisers were first sent to Vietnam after Kennedy took office in 1961. But the escalation of the war and introduction of combat troops occurred under former President Lyndon Johnson, who took over after Kennedy's assassination in November 1963.

The war did not end until 1975, 12 years after Kennedy's death. Mr. McNamara said he blamed himself for not forcing Johnson to consider military and diplomatic options to end the conflict.

"We failed to analyse our assumptions critically," Mr. McNamara wrote. "We never stopped to explore fully whether there were more routes to our destination."

Mr. McNamara, 78, has been frequently blamed for not doing more to end the conflict despite his early, documented conclusion that the United States and its South Vietnamese ally could not defeat the Hanoi-led Communist forces militarily.

In 1964, Mr. McNamara said, he and Johnson were shocked by the "almost cavalier" manner in which the Joint Chiefs of Staff warned that maintaining "a non-Communist South Vietnam... would almost inevitably involve a Korean-scale ground action and possibly even the use of nuclear weapons."

Mr. McNamara said Johnson sought advice on bombing Vietnam from former President Dwight Eisenhower.

"I began by saying LBJ's first duty was to contain communism in South East Asia," wrote Mr. McNamara, adding one official said it might take eight U.S. divisions to prevent a Communist takeover of South Vietnam.

Mr. McNamara also said "a secret memo by the CIA's Dick Helms shows that, in the fall of 1967, the CIA's most senior analysts believed we could have withdrawn without any permanent damage to U.S. or Western security."

Indian police chief defends young love

NEW DELHI (AFP) — An Indian police chief has turned Cupid's assistant and ordered his staff to protect courting couples in the eastern city of Calcutta, the Times of India newspaper said Sunday. Tushar Talukdar, head of Calcutta's police force, said in an interview that lovers frequenting the city's verdant parks would not be harassed either by policemen or local toughs. "I think lovers are a beautiful feature of the city's life," the writer-policeman said. "But for them (many) places would lose much of their charm. We want that they should be able to meet in peace. Love is a rare experience in the time of youth (and) no filthy hand should soil it."

Chief Talukdar said the sprawling lawns of the Victoria Memorial, a fin de siècle marble memorial built during British colonial rule, the promenade on the river Hooghly and city parks would henceforth be safe havens for those in love. "Lovers are free to sit together holding hands. They can sip tea or coffee and be a little warm. The police has been instructed to ensure that they are not disturbed," he said. Chief Talukdar's interview came shortly after two Calcutta policemen were suspended for illegally fining a young married couple, travelling by taxi, on charges of obscenity. The husband had been resting his head on his wife's shoulder — a vulgar display of affection by traditional Indian standards which proscribe physical contact between the sexes in public.

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Rwandan Hutu refugees, back from the Tanzanian border which was closed to refugees by the government, are checked by a Burundian soldier at the Magara refugee camp, near the northern Burundian town of Ngozi. The office of the U.N. High Commissioner for Refugees begins to return some 30,000 Rwandan Hutus to their camp at Magara (AFP photo)

Refugee transfer to resume in Burundi

BUJUMBURA (AFP) — An operation to transfer some 40,000 Rwandan Hutus back to their refugee camps in northern Burundi will resume Monday following a suspension due to a grenade attack, a U.N. official said Sunday.

Shelly Peterman, the regional coordinator of the U.N. High Commissioner for Refugees, said her agency had received assurances from officials in Burundi that the convoys transporting the refugees would receive better protection from the army.

On Saturday, a grenade was thrown at a truck carrying some of the refugees and seven were injured, including a child who was severely hurt.

The truck was part of a convoy bringing Hutus back to a makeshift facility on the road to the border with Tanzania. A total of 1,500 refugees had made it back to the Magara refugee camp when a grenade was hurled at a truck that was still on the road.

Tens of thousands had tried to flee to that neighboring country over the past few weeks because of rising ethnic violence in Burundi, but Tanzania shut its border, saying it already had 700,000 refugees and could not cope with more.

Meanwhile, the Burundi capital Bujumbura remained calm for the second consecutive night Saturday despite fears of violence following the killing Thursday of a South African journalist and two Tutsis in an ambush attack.

Hundreds of thousands of Rwandans from the majority Hutu tribe fled to Burundi last July when Tutsi-led rebels seized power in Rwanda after three months of ethnic carnage that left more than half a million people dead. Most of those killed were Tutsis and Hutu moderates targeted by Hutu extremists.

Britain 'foiled plot to kill' Adams

LONDON (R) — British intelligence agents foiled a plot by IRA hardliners to assassinate Sinn Fein President Gerry Adams, the Observer newspaper said Sunday.

The newspaper, citing security sources, said the assassination was planned by dissidents in the Irish Republican Army who were angered by a ceasefire called by the guerrilla group last year in its fight to oust Britain from Northern Ireland.

The sources said the plotters were kept under surveillance until just minutes before the attempt was to take place in January against Mr. Adams, leader of the IRA's political wing.

Early warnings had been received by Britain's MI5 security agency, the paper said.

"A faction of IRA people in south Armagh (the border county known as 'bandit country') had been determined to wipe Adams out because they thought he was leading them nowhere. The thing was uncovered and dealt with," one source said.

Mr. Adams has accused the British government of stalling the peace process in Northern Ireland, now enjoying its first protracted ceasefire in the 25-year conflict that took more than 3,000 lives.

Smith finally votes in Zimbabwe elections

HARARE (R) — Former white Rhodesian leader Ian Smith finally voted Sunday in Zimbabwe's general elections after a computer glitch thwarted his first bid to cast his ballot.

He confirmed with a grin that he had not voted for President Robert Mugabe's ZANU-PF, which was assured of a majority in the 150-seat parliament even before voting started Saturday.

"That you can be sure," he told reporters outside the red brick Alexandra Primary School Gymnasium where he cast his ballot.

ZANU-PF had already taken 53 seats for lack of opposition candidates. The president appoints another 20 members, while tribal chiefs fill 10 seats in the legislature.

Mr. Smith, Mr. Mugabe's arch foe during years of black struggle against the breakaway Rhodesian regime before independent Zimbabwe emerged in 1980, first came to vote Saturday.

He was turned away when scrutineers were unable to find his name on the electoral roll updated last year. Mr. Mugabe himself said he would call the registrar-general to check the case.

The Election Directorate did a computer check Saturday night and found Mr. Smith's surname had been mistakenly printed as "Ian Smith," rather than "Smith," thus eluding the polling station officials.

He returned Sunday, a day after his 76th birthday, with a letter of apology from the government and no further problems.

Hitler murdered? Yet another theory on the dictator's demise

BONN (AP) — Theories about Hitler's death and what became of his remains are a bit like unidentified flying object sightings: They pop up from time to time and are hard to disprove in the absence of solid bones.

In his will, Hitler ordered every trace of his existence destroyed when he died. This last wish was almost granted, though not as Hitler imagined.

The Red Army inherited Hitler's mortal remains after capturing the bunker where he died on April 30, 1945. Because of Soviet bungling and scheming, it has taken decades to learn what became of what was left of the Nazi leader.

"The tomb of Napoleon is in the middle of Paris; the remains of Stalin are in the Kremlin Wall," British historian Norman Stone wrote in the Evening Standard of London Thursday. "But what ever happened to Hitler? For decades this has been a great mystery."

Before and since communism's fall, Russian intelligence officials have conducted a brisk trade in the Hitler file. The selective release of artifacts stashed in various Soviet ministries and archives has resulted in a series of press canards, and laid fertile ground for hoaxes.

In 1983, Stern magazine published what it believed were Hitler's diaries, recovered from a long-abandoned plane wreck. They turned out to have been written by a neo-Nazi hired by a Stern reporter.

Two years ago, to much fanfare, Russian authorities said they had found pieces of Hitler's skull in a Moscow archive. But Werner Maser, a well-known Hitler biographer, says they were fakes.

Now — in time for the 50th anniversary of Hitler's death — a British surgeon has challenged the widely accepted version that Hitler committed suicide. He also says Hitler's wife, Eva Braun, did not die by his side.

In Doppelgangers: The Truth About The Bodies In The Berlin Bunker, Dr. Hugh Thomas says newly opened Russian files show that an SS guard murdered Hitler and burned his body with that of a woman who was not Braun.

Mr. Maser says Mr. Thomas' version fits the pattern of misinformation about Hitler's death. More than 200,000 books have been written about Hitler and his era. One version has it that he fled to Ireland and then to Argentina.

"The Russians have made a huge business of coming up with new evidence on Hitler," said Mr. Maser. The bones and forensic records examined by Mr. Thomas were "the seventh Hitler body the Russians have offered to scholars," he said.

Mr. Thomas, a former British army doctor, previously has written books claiming Hitler aide Rudolf Hess was murdered in 1941 while flying to Scotland with a proposal to end the war. He claimed the Hess who died in 1987 at Berlin's Spandau Prison was an imposter.

"Outrageous bunk," said Mr. Maser.

In the new book, to be published on April 24 in Britain by 4th Estate Ltd., Mr. Thomas writes that Hitler was strangled by Heinz Linge, his SS valet.

The SS men living in Hitler's bunker were eager for Hitler to die so they could get out and flee the approaching Soviet troops, Mr. Thomas said.

The widely accepted account, based on witnesses, is that Hitler shot himself while chewing a cyanide capsule on April 30, 10 days after his 56th birthday, and that Braun, whom Hitler had married two nights earlier, poisoned herself.

That version is confirmed by Dr. Ernst G. Schenk, 90, who was a German army doctor stationed near Hitler's bunker. Dr. Schenk said Walter Hewel, a senior Hitler aide, told him about the suicide a few hours after it happened.

"Then Hewel killed himself. He did it in my presence, the same way he described Hitler's death — biting a cyanide capsule and shooting himself in the head," Dr. Schenk said in a telephone interview from his Aachen home.

Guards partially incinerated the Hitler and Braun bodies and dumped them in a shell hole with 14 other corpses. The shallow "grave" was repeatedly struck by Red Army shells. Then the Soviets dug up the remains, and it was several decades before anyone learned what became of them.

Witnesses who had seen Hitler's body parts were kept in Soviet prison camps for 10 years, British historian Stone said.

"Stalin at first suspected his men's account of Hitler's death and later sought to create a cold war myth that Hitler was living under British or American protection."

Villagers hold key to Chechenya conflict

VEDENO, Russia (AFP) — The bloody conflict between Russian and separatist Chechen forces looks set to be decided in the mountain villages of the Caucasus in coming days, following spectacular advances by the Russians.

Russian forces have made inexorable progress in the plains of the republic, even though they cannot claim to have gained a total victory since they launched their assault on the separatist republic nearly four months ago.

After spectacular advances in the east, taking the separatist strongholds of Argun, Shali and Gudermes within days of each other, on Saturday they claimed a significant victory in the west by capturing Samashki, a village which had held out for weeks.

But they seem above all to be winning the psychological war, with villagers across the lowlands more willing to reach deals with the Russians to preserve their homes.

In Samashki, however, residents told AFP that in the last few hours before the city fell to the Russians, separatist fighters killed several village elders who wanted them to leave the city in order to save it from destruction.

Similar conflicts are being reported in other villages controlled by Chechen forces.

"We can see what the Russians are doing, how they are destroying everything opposed to them. Here we are surrounded, we can do nothing but wait for when they kill us," said Aslambek Dochukayev, 71, one of the leaders in Serzhen Yurt, near Shali.

"Of course it grieves all of us, but we have to surrender," he added.

The village in recent days banned access to Chechen fighters but the latter were said to be holed up in surrounding woods.

"The (Chechen) fighters are firing at the Russians from there and there," explained village elder Sultan Naduyev, pointing to two clumps of trees a few hundred metres either side of Serzhen Yurt.

"But the Russians are firing back at us. They know the fighters aren't here, but they fire anyway. Yesterday another two houses were destroyed by shells," he said.

That has been the tactic used by the Russians since the war turned in their favour: target civilians to persuade them to turn against the separatists.

After first appearing counter-productive — when massive shelling of the Chechen capital Grozny prompted many civilians to take up arms against Russian forces or lend support to the rebels — it now seems to be paying off.

Sometimes the separatists accept the decisions of village elders and leave. More often they resist, either by persuading them to continue the fight or reminding them of Russian reprisals carried out in larger towns, or simply by using force.

In Serzhen Yurt the departing Chechens simply stopped village leaders going through to negotiate with the Russians. In Samashki they went further.

The Chechens know they have lost the war for the plains. The question now is whether they can convince villagers in the mountains to continue their support despite the threat of massive Russian bombardments.

Without their support it will be almost impossible for them to lead their threatened guerrilla war against the Russians from this northern flank of the Caucasus.

"The mountain villages were always (Chechen separatist President Dzhokhar) Dudayev's most ardent supporters before the war and helped fighters since the Russians marched in, but now that the war has arrived on their doorstep they are starting to ask questions," said Raman, in a hamlet near Vedeno, the mountain village where Chechens have set up their military headquarters.

Late Saturday, a small group of fighters interrupted a meeting and, during an argument which followed, one of them killed an elder who was urging surrender.

At his funeral Sunday, villagers agreed to wait for news from the thousands of refugees who have abandoned their mountain villages in the past few days to return to their home towns.

"If they are not having any problems, the villages will decide to surrender as well," said a neighbor. "The fighters will have no option but to starve to death in the mountains."

Japan sect guru tries to leave for Moscow

TOKYO (AFP) — The guru of the doomsday sect linked to the nerve gas attack on the Tokyo subway system, is believed to have tried to leave for Moscow Sunday as police continued raids on sect facilities, news reports said.

Shoko Asahara, the founder of Aum Shinri Kyo, or the Supreme Truth, did not appear at Tokyo's Narita Airport Sunday, although his name had been booked on Japan Airlines Flight 445 bound for Moscow, Jiji Press and other reports said.

The whereabouts of the founder of the religious group, suspected of carrying out the sarin gas attack on the Tokyo subway system on March 20, remain unknown.

Police, meanwhile, continued raids on sect facilities Sunday in an effort to find evidence linking the group to the subway attack which killed 11 people and injured some 5,500 others.

Previous raids by police authorities to seize some 40 different types of chemicals which could be used to make sarin.

Ten days after the gas attack, Japan's top police chief, Takaji Kunimatsu, was shot and seriously wounded.

There have been no arrests in connection with the attacks and the Supreme Truth has repeatedly denied any involvement in the assaults.

On Sunday, police raided a machine manufacturing company established by Asahara in Shizuoka Prefecture, southwest of here, on suspicion it was making guns, news reports said.

Police did not find any guns or weapons parts in the raid but investigation sources were quoted as saying that a factory of the sect was equipped with a computer-controlled machine tool which could be used to manufacture guns.

In Kanazawa Prefecture, western Japan, police raided a sect branch on suspicion of violation of the narcotics control law, press reports said.

Police raids on Supreme Truth facilities began on March 22 and similar operations have since been conducted every day.

Meanwhile Sri Lankan police are pursuing an investigation into the local branch of the Japanese religious sect, officials said Sunday.

Mussolini's tragic daughter, Edda, dies at 85

ROME (R) — Edda Mussolini, 85, the tragic daughter of Italy's wartime fascist dictator whose husband was executed by her father's regime, has died, doctors said Sunday.

Ciano had been ill for some time. She died Saturday night of cardiac arrest related to lung and kidney failure in a Rome hospital.

The oldest and favorite of Benito Mussolini's five children, she was an independent-minded woman when females in Italy had few rights. She was one of the first Italian women to wear trousers and drive a car.

But she is best remembered for an episode in which her father refused to stop the execution of her husband, Galeazzo Ciano.

Galeazzo Ciano, a playboy count, held various top cabinet posts under Mussolini in the 1930s and in the early years of World War II.

In July 1943, he voted against Mussolini at a cabinet meeting that led to the dictator's arrest and the fall of fascism.

Under orders from Adolf Hitler, occupying German troops freed Mussolini and installed him as head of a puppet regime known as the Social Republic of Salò, based in northern Italy.

The new regime found Galeazzo Ciano guilty of treason and ordered him executed. Mussolini turned a deaf ear to his daughter's emotional pleas for a pardon and Ciano was shot by a firing squad in 1944.

Edda Ciano had helped smuggle her husband's diaries and documents on Italian-German relations to Switzerland in the vain hope of swapping them with the Germans for her husband's life.

Her direct appeal to Hitler, whom she admired from an early age, also failed.

After the execution, Edda, a determined fascist who was one of her father's closest advisers in the 1930s, disavowed him and the family name.

"You are no longer my father for me. I renounce the name Mussolini," she wrote to him.

Benito Mussolini was himself killed by a partisan firing squad in April 1945 in the final days of World War II.

After the war Edda settled quietly in Rome.

She broke her public silence on wartime events in a 1975 book, "My Testimony and several years before her death she attended a public mass in memory of her dictator father."

She is said never to have reached a reconciliation with her mother Rachele, Mussolini's widow, who died 15 years ago. Her mother blamed Edda's husband for being responsible for the fall of Benito Mussolini.

Edda Mussolini Ciano was born in 1910 in the Mussolini family's home province of Forlì in central Italy. She married Galeazzo Ciano in 1930. They had three children.

Iceland's Oddsson wins cliffhanger election

REYKJAVIK (R) — Iceland's conservative Prime Minister David Oddsson scraped through in a cliffhanger election to the country's 1,065-year-old parliament and was beginning talks on forming a new coalition government Sunday.

After an election night when the majority in the 63-seat Althing, founded by Viking settlers in 930 A.D., swung back and forth, final results gave Mr. Oddsson's centre-right government 32 seats against 31 for the centre-left opposition.

His conservative Independence Party, in power since 1991, won 25 seats, losing one. Its Social Democrat coalition partners were the big losers, dropping to seven seats from 10.

The opposition centrist Progressive Party won 15 seats, up from 13, the Socialists an unchanged nine, a new breakaway social democratic grouping called the People's Movement four, and the Women's Party three, losing two seats.

Mr. Oddsson, 47, a former playboy, said talks on forming a new government would not necessarily result in an unchanged coalition.

"It would be fair to negotiate first with the Social Democrats as we have ruled together for four years. But I would not exclude other (coalition) options," he told reporters.

There have been frictions within the government over fishery policies and the European Union. The Social Democrats is the only Icelandic party which wants the windswept North Atlantic island to join the EU.

Some commentators said Mr. Oddsson might try to persuade the Progressive Party, which gained two seats in the election, to replace the Social Democrats in his government.

But other constellations could emerge once the dust settles after talks between Iceland's traditionally pragmatic political parties.

Regardless of the makeup of the new government, stability-oriented economic policies for low inflation were certain to continue, commentators said.

TV candidates embarrass Murayama in elections

TOKYO (R) — Former TV entertainers running as independents had upset wins over main political parties Sunday when they took the governorships of Tokyo and Osaka, NHK Television reported.

NHK exit polls said both comies beat elite bureaucrats backed by Prime Minister Tomiichi Murayama's ruling coalition in the first national test of his nine-month-old government.

With five per cent of votes counted in the Tokyo race, NHK declared former writer and comic actor Yukio Aoshima, who spent the campaign staying home "studying public administration" rather than spending campaign funds, the winner over a senior government bureaucrat backed by Murayama's coalition.

In Osaka, NHK said former television comedian Nokku "Knock" Yokoyama beat another bureaucrat backed by Mr. Murayama's three-party coalition.

Both comies-turned-governors were not new to politics, having earlier turned their fame into success by winning seats in the upper house of parliament, a mainly rubber-stamp body.

NHK said election turnout was greater than expected, indicating voters threw off predicted apathy to give a judgment on Mr. Murayama's handling of recent tragedies ranging from the Kobe earthquake, to a gas attack on the Tokyo subway system and the shooting of the country's top policeman.

The Tokyo and Osaka contests were part of polls to elect governors of 13 of 47 prefectures or provinces, 43 of 47 prefectural assemblies, and 10 of the 12 largest city councils.

The elections in Tokyo and Osaka, Japan's two largest population centres, were closely watched as indicators of voter sentiment ahead of possible general elections later this year.

Upper house elections take place in July and polls for the decisive lower house, although not due until 1997.

Media polls before the election showed nearly half the electorate was undecided.

Tokyo's predicted new governor Aoshima said he won "not because the unaffiliated voter doesn't care about politics, but because existing parties didn't earn the voter's trust."

These results can be seen as a meltdown of political parties," said political analyst Takayoshi Miyagawa.

He said the election result could force both ruling and opposition parties to rethink alliances formed over the nearly two years of political turmoil and odd-couple alliances that have destroyed traditional Japanese politics.

Mr. Murayama's Socialists and their coalition partners, the long-ruling Liberal Democratic Party (LDP) and the small Sakigake Party are ranged against the New Frontier Party (NFP), the main parliamentary opposition group.

The NFP, made up of nine former parties, was formed only four months ago.

But in a sign of how the political game is still being played out in Japan, there was a direct confrontation between Mr. Murayama's coalition and the NFP in only three of the 13 gubernatorial contests, all in rural areas.

In one of these clashes, a candidate backed by chief opposition strategist Ichiro Ozawa won easily. NHK predicted.

Mr. Murayama's administration has seen its approval ratings slump after sluggish handling of the Kobe earthquake in January, lack of progress in police investigations into the gas attack, and inability to implement meaningful policies to cut red tape and streamline powerful state bureaucracies.

Top officials in the LDP, ostensibly Mr. Murayama's allies, have dropped hints that disastrous results in Sunday's polls could push the country's biggest parliamentary group to drop out of the coalition, ensuring a general election.

Jordan Times

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Disputes can wait

THE RECENT elections for the Jordanian Law and Medical Associations were held amidst a serious controversy about whether the lawyers and the doctors of the West Bank can still take part in the voting process. The government has taken the two professional groups to task for allowing members from the West Bank to vote. The two concerned ministries based their decision to challenge the validity of the polls on the proposition that the 1988 decision to sever all legal and administrative relations with the occupied territory meant that West Bankers were not entitled to take part in Jordanian elections since their land was no longer subject to Jordanian sovereignty. The government's position was apparently triggered by a recent ruling of the Supreme Court of Justice rejecting the claim of a resident of the West Bank for full citizenship rights.

The central issue in the whole controversy was and still is the legal import of the 1988 decision to break all relations with the West Bank which until then formed an integral part of the Kingdom. While there is a near consensus that the decision was a sovereign act that enjoys full legal effect, the fact that relevant Jordanian laws were not amended accordingly gave rise to legal disputes and questions. In the case of the associations of doctors and lawyers, they continued to conduct their affairs in accordance with bylaws that were enacted prior to the disengagement decision. This fact may explain why these two professional groups continued to hold their elections on the basis of rules and regulations that were passed when the two banks formed one united Kingdom. There is therefore a prima facie case in favour of the legality of the recent elections since they were conducted on the basis of existing laws.

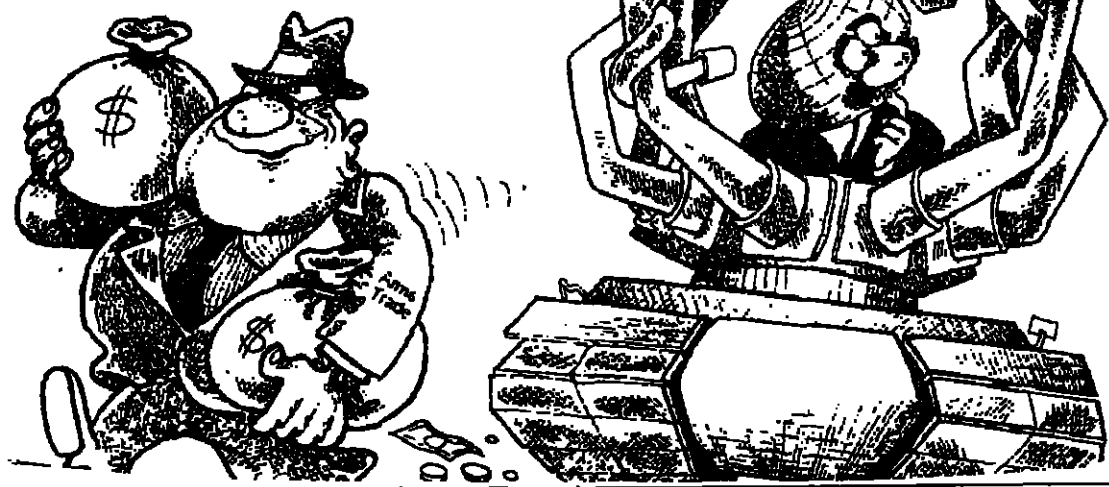
While it is imprudent now to take sides in this legal controversy, in order to avoid prejudicing its final determination in a court of law, we have to ask ourselves a question or two about the political propriety of challenging the results of the most recent polls. Since there was no sufficient time to change the groundrules for these elections before they were held, political wisdom demands that we live with their outcome and work thereafter on introducing the necessary changes on the bylaws of all professional groupings.

ARABIC PRESS COMMENTARIES

AL RA'I Arabic daily on Sunday called on Israel to sign the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT), stressing that it is the way to ensure that future generations in the Middle East enjoy a secure and stable peace. The newspaper said in its editorial that His Majesty King Hussein has repeatedly called for the elimination of weapons of mass destruction. It said this call directly or indirectly requires Israel to sign the NPT, knowing that Israel has a huge arsenal of nuclear weapons. It underlined that peace cannot survive with those signs of destruction inherent in the Israeli nuclear arsenal. The newspaper said Jordan was always an advocate of peace that can be enjoyed by future generations, a peace that would prevail during the 21st century. It said the King reiterated this in meetings and addresses in the U.S. and Canada, underlining that a comprehensive peace that would last for the future is not the one between governments and individuals, but peace between peoples. Within this context, King Hussein spoke of three foundations for this peace: stability, security and economic development, which would allow real opportunities for investments to help upgrade economic, social and other living conditions of peoples of the region, it noted.

AL DUSTOUR Arabic daily dealt in its editorial with the King's visit to Canada and commended the existing relations between Jordan and Canada. The paper said His Majesty's current visit to Canada acquires an exceptional importance in view of the vitality and warmth of ties between the two countries. It said the visit is also of special nature since it exceeds the diplomatic implications to include a vast ground for economic cooperation between the two countries. Jordan, it said, still gratefully remembers the understanding showed by Canada of the Jordanian stand on the Gulf crisis when Canada preferred to preserve the friendship ties and to extend a helping hand at the most difficult of situations.

M. KAHIL



Clinton places U.S. policy at Israel's bidding

By Donald Neff

LESS THAN two months after Bill Clinton became president, Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin declared: "Israel has a good friend in the White House." Now, two years later and mid-way through his term, Mr. Clinton has made Mr. Rabin's words an understatement. The record reveals that Mr. Clinton has been more than a good friend of Israel. He has already proved to be the most pro-Israel president ever, exceeding even the Reagan administration. This is true across the board. The Clinton administration has increased to their highest levels technology transfers to Israel, supported increased economic and military aid, expanded bilateral contacts and, most importantly, placed U.S. diplomacy at Israel's bidding. The administration has managed all this largely because of an indifferent or biased press and by refusing to discuss in detail its policies. When reporters tried to pin down Secretary of State Warren Christopher in mid-1993 on the status of Jerusalem, he insisted that "I don't think it helps very much to get into an almost theological discussion. The parties know what's under discussion." By such elusive statements, the administration has successfully fended off challenges to its policy.

Abandoning core policies

But a close examination of its actions and its few public statements reveals that Mr. Clinton is involved in more than a theological discussion. He has gone far to abandon nearly a half-century of U.S. policies on the core issues of the Palestine conflict. These range from borders to Jerusalem to settlements to U.N. Resolution 242 to the applicability of the Fourth Geneva Convention Relative to the Protection of Civilian Persons in Time of War — the pillars of U.S. policy. The Geneva Convention went by the board almost as soon as Mr. Clinton moved into the White House. Mr. Christopher essentially condoned the mass deportation of 415 Palestinians to Lebanon and successfully opposed efforts by the U.N. Security Council to punish Israel's violation of the Convention. The result was to drop Washington's traditional opposition to deportations of an occupied population, a violation of the Convention.

The Convention's article against colonisation of land held by a military occupier has also been abandoned. While previous administrations have called Israeli settlements in the occupied territories "obstacles to peace" and "illegal," the Clinton administration describes them as a "complicating factor." That is the description routinely used by Assistant Secretary of State for Near East Affairs Robert H. Pelletreau when he testifies before Congress.

In addition, the Clinton administration has breached the previous policy of barring U.S. aid funds from being used to construct settlements. Israel now routinely employs U.S. funds for this purpose; at the end of the year Washington conducts an exercise in imaginative accounting and deducts what is claimed to be the amount used on settlements from the \$10bn loan guarantee granted Israel in 1992. Since Israel has not displayed any urgent need for the guarantee, the effect

is to "deduct" funds that Israel is not planning to use anyway. Similar sleight-of-hand tactics have been employed by the Clinton administration on the important issue of the status of the Palestinian territories captured by Israel in 1967. Before Mr. Clinton, the U.S. had followed the world community's designation of the territories as occupied. But Mr. Clinton and his officials refuse to define the U.S. position. All indications point to a complete retreat by Mr. Clinton on this fundamental issue. His administration has refused to call East Jerusalem occupied territory, even to the point of opposing such a description in the U.N. where previous administrations had routinely joined in thus describing East Jerusalem. Moreover, the State Department reported without comment in 1994 that Israel "made no commitment to halt or reduce construction in East Jerusalem and has affirmed its intention to continue settlement construction 100 square miles around the city." The administration's silence amounted to tacit approval of Israel's designs on Jerusalem.

In fact, Mr. Clinton has supported Israel's claim to Jerusalem, saying: "I recognise Jerusalem as an undivided city, the eternal capital to Israel, and I believe in the principle of moving our embassy to Jerusalem." But he cautioned that he did not think "we should do anything to interfere with the peace process." He made the statement in 1992 as a candidate and has done nothing since then to indicate he has changed his position. The implication of all this is that the administration has adopted Israel's claim that the status of the territories is not occupied but "in dispute." If so, it means that the Clinton administration is abandoning Resolution 242's land-for-peace formula. This suspicion is reinforced by the administration's official position on final status talks between Israel and the Palestinians: "The two sides concur that the agreement reached between them on permanent status will constitute the implementation of Resolutions 242 and 338 in all their aspects."

This extraordinary statement essentially says that 242 no longer applies since, under the U.S. formulation, whatever the two parties agree on fulfils the resolution. That presumably means that the resolution's demand for the "withdrawal of Israeli armed forces from territories occupied in the recent conflict" no longer applies. Under the U.S. formulation, the resolution would be fulfilled under any sort of agreement worked out in negotiations between a powerful Israel and the disorganised and weak Palestinians. Abandonment of 242 means, in addition, that its demand for "a just settlement of the refugee problem" is left to the determination of bilateral negotiations. This fits in with a strategy that seems to aim at eradicating the refugees as an international problem. Evidence comes from the fact that it is the first administration to vote against all U.N. General Assembly resolutions pertaining to the rights of the Palestinian refugees, claiming that "such resolutions prejudice the outcome of the ongoing peace process and should be solved by direct negotiations."

Pro-Israeli bureaucracy

Such a sea-change in basic policies is unprecedented in U.S. diplomacy. While the media have failed to take note of the historic realignment of policy, the Israeli media have not. Journalist Avinoam Bar-Yousef of the Israeli daily Ma'ariv reported in late 1994 that "Jewish influence (in Washington) can only be described as immense, with a corresponding enhancement of Jewish power." Bar-Yousef added that this was due to "President Clinton, who has contributed towards a real change in administration outlook... Especially, pious Jews were seldom appointed to participate in political work concerning the Middle East. The picture now has totally changed, and not only about the Middle East." Indeed, Zionists, Jewish and non-Jewish, have dominated Mr. Clinton's policy on the Middle East. Secretary of State Christopher has remained something of a cipher on the conflict, perhaps because

he does not understand what is going on. But the extent of Mr. Christopher's knowledge is unimportant because the president and the bureaucracy around him are solidly in Israel's court. Vice President Al Gore, for example, has described Israel as "our strongest ally and best friend, not only in the Middle East, but anywhere else in the world." But it is in the bureaucracy that the actual details of policy are formed, and it is there that a powerful pro-Israel group of individuals has taken over under Mr. Clinton. The most influential bureaucrats during the Clinton administration were Dennis Ross, Martin Indyk and Samuel Lewis.

Mr. Ross is the chief negotiator of Mr. Clinton's peace process. He was an academic political appointee who climbed to ambassadorial rank as director of the State Department's policy planning staff under Mr. Baker. At the change of administrations, he had planned to leave the department to become head of the Washington Institute for Near East Policy, a spin-off of the pro-Israel lobby, AIPAC, before being chosen to head the U.S. peace process team. His sympathies are no secret, and his credentials include what the Washington Post called his "strong pro-Israel convictions." He has been active for years in promoting pro-Israel positions in various studies and forums. Another Zionist in a policy position is Martin Indyk, the head of the Middle East desk at the National Security Council for the first half of Mr. Clinton's term and soon to be the first Jewish ambassador to Israel. He is an Australian who came to the U.S. in the early 1980s to work for AIPAC and in 1985 co-founded the Washington Institute for Near East Policy. He was reported to have said that the purpose of the institute was to "counter Arabist views." The institute has been extraordinarily successful.

Yet another top pro-Israel official was Samuel Lewis, head of the State Department's policy planning staff during the first year of Mr. Clinton's presidency. Mr. Lewis had been ambassador to Israel for eight years, where his sympathies for the Israeli cause made him one of the most popular envoys ever. When he retired in 1985, Israel lavished honours and lucrative appointments upon him. At the time, Mr. Lewis said he planned to spend about half his time living in Israel and helping Israel's fund-raising. Like Mr. Ross and Mr. Indyk, he was closely associated with the Washington Institute for Near East Policy. Even though he retired from the administration after a year, the basic pro-Israel policy had been established by then. The long crusade by Zionists against State Department "Arabists" had succeeded.

Nor is the message lost on politicians. Congress remains filled with pro-Israel senators and representatives, and the White House is filled with Israel's friends. The New York Times recently reported that Mr. Clinton received 60 per cent of his campaign funds from Jews and got 80 per cent of their vote in 1992. He has done nothing since then that would cause Zionists to believe their trust in him was misplaced.

Middle East International

Human Rights File

By Waleed Sa'di

Building a culture of peace

FROM A human rights perspective, peace between peoples and countries can be durable only when it is constructed on a culture of peace. Accordingly, in order for peace between the Israelis and the Arabs to be permanent, a culture of peace that transcends the peace treaties that have already been attained or will be achieved later is needed. The initial euphoria generated by the peace treaties between Egypt and Jordan on the one hand and Israel on the other are not sufficient for laying the necessary foundation for the emergence of a culture of peace because four essential factors are still missing.

First, there can be no culture of peace unless Damascus becomes an integral part of the peace process. In my modest estimation as a human rights activist, there is no price that is too high to pay for attaining this goal. There has always been a saying in the Middle East that there can be no regional war between Israel and the Arab side without the participation of Egypt and no regional peace between the two camps without Syria. I believe this assessment holds true now more than ever. To ever think that a true and genuine culture of peace can be generated in the area without Damascus is simply a wishful thinking.

Secondly, I contend that no such culture of peace can be ever realised without a just settlement of the Palestinian problem. Israel may convince itself that the PLO has already been marginalised and its infant Palestinian National Authority (PNA) is so fragile and impotent that peace culture between the Israelis and the Arab peoples can still be achieved over and above the heads of the central party to the Arab-Israeli conflict. Any Machiavellian thoughts along these lines are bound to short-circuit somewhere along the line sooner or later. Durable peace cannot be even conceived without the resolution of this basic element in the Arab-Israeli disputes.

Thirdly, the involvement of Baghdad in the peace process is critical for the nurturing of a culture of peace in the region. So far Iraq has not figured highly on the agenda of the promoters of peace in the area because of the Gulf war in 1991 and its dire consequences on the role of Iraq in the politics of the region. No matter how we view the regime of Iraqi President Saddam Hussein, Iraq remains a regional power in the area and the sooner it is reckoned with the better it would be for the cause of peace. Thus far all parties have conducted their peace efforts as if Iraq does not exist or will not exist. There is more to Iraq than its leadership or its government. Sooner or later, Iraq will reemerge as a strong Arab country whose interests will have to be protected.

The fourth element necessary for promoting a peace culture is the elimination of weapons of mass destruction as the current balance of power suits Israel at an advantage that will continue to be a source of alarm for the Arab people.

These considerations, I submit, are prerequisite for the promotion and protection of a culture of peace between Israel and the Arab World. Any attempt to bypass or belittle them would harm the cause of regional peace.

LETTERS

Caring for animals

To the Editor:

ON BEHALF of the Jordanian Society for the Protection of Animals (JSPA), I wish to comment on Waleed Sa'di's article, "Animals have rights too" (Jordan Times, March 20). In it he says, "most advanced countries of the world have national societies for the protection of animals. We may not be as advanced as the Western world to create such a national forum to speak out on behalf of the other creatures of God."

I am surprised that Mr. Sa'di does not appear to know that we have had an animal protection society in Jordan since November 1988. The society now has a clinic in Deir Alla in the Jordan Valley, which was opened in April 1993 by its patron Her Royal Highness Princess Zein. It also has new headquarters and a second clinic, which were opened by Her Royal Highness Princess Nafa'a Bint Ali, deputising for Princess Zein, only on Saturday, March 18, 1995. We have had articles and letters in the Jordan Times from time to time over the past six years about the rights of animals, which Mr. Sa'di has obviously not noticed. Often we are asked why we are helping animals instead of humans. In fact we are helping humans by keeping their working animals in a fit condition to be able to work for them. Compassion to animals goes hand in hand with compassion to human beings. Human tragedies are not happening because some people are helping animals. It is quite possible to be supportive and compassionate to both. We cannot wait to help animals until the last human mouth has been fed and the last war has been fought.

We should remember that animals are God's creatures just as we are. To ignore some of the animal victims we see each week would be a gross act of inhumanity. The book "Islamic Concern for Animals" by the late Al Hafiz B. Masri tells how the Holy Koran condones kindness to animals. I quote from it: "The Holy Prophet used to say 'Whoever is kind to the creatures of God, is kind to himself'." The Prophet was asked if acts of charity even to the animals were rewarded by God. He replied: "Yes there is a reward for acts of charity to every beast alive." Let us hope a day will dawn when the great religious teaching may at last begin to bear fruit... when man accords to animals the respect and status they have long deserved and for so long have been denied.

Miss Chris Larter,
Jordanian Society for the
Protection of Animals,
Wadi Seer,
Amman.

The Jordan Times welcomes letters and contributions from its readers on any subject they wish to tackle. Letters intended for publication, however, should contain the writer's full name and preferably address as well. Names can be withheld only upon request and under special circumstances. Letters are subject to editing. The newspaper is not responsible for the return of unused manuscripts.

Jordan Times
Tel.: 667171

A journalist in jeopardy

Russia's top newsman confronts a hostile state

By Lee Hockstader

MOSCOW — The telephone call from the Kremlin came four days after the war in Chechnya started in December. Already people in high places were unhappy with the way NTV, Russia's only independent television station, was covering the violence.

There was too much blood, too much criticism. The evening news was making the Russian government and army look bad. Very bad.

"You are in great danger," the official told a top executive at NTV. "If you continue to cover the Chechen war in this manner, there is a possibility that your licence could be withdrawn."

The warning, the man added, was official. It came right from the top — from President Boris Yeltsin's own chief of staff. It could be quoted to the press if NTV chose. And that was all.

Yevgeni Kiselyov, who is telling this story, pauses for effect. It's a long pause. Pausing for effect is something Mr. Kiselyov does a lot, and millions of Russians know this trademark vocal stutter-step as well as they know their own manners.

Mr. Kiselyov is a household name in Russia. He is a founder and vice president of NTV and host of its Sunday evening week-in-review news show, "Itogi."

or "Wrap-Up" which is obligatory viewing for intellectuals, decision-makers and political insiders in the capital and beyond.

Since the war in Chechnya began more than three months ago, he and NTV have been on the front lines of a battle in Moscow that has run parallel to that on the ground in Grozny — a battle of journalism versus propaganda, of the new Russia versus the old.

"We wanted to show the best pictures, we wanted to break the news," Mr. Kiselyov says in his fluent English. "We were the first to show the Russian Su-25 plane that was shot down by the Chechens. We were the first to show the first Russian helicopter that was shot down. The first to show the first Russian POWs in the early days of the crisis. That was when we ran into hostility from the government."

The NTV reports and Mr. Kiselyov's town show were influential, not in altering the government's behaviour or the course of the war but in stirring popular disgust with a policy widely seen as brutal and aggressive. Mr. Yeltsin's approval rating, already dismal, sank below 10 per cent.

To many Russians, NTV and Mr. Kiselyov came to symbolise a brand of hard-hitting, incisive television journalism still in its infancy.

here. As NTV continued to hammer away at the war, even the state-controlled television stations began airing tougher reports and more damning footage.

The reporting was impassioned, at times sickening in its unflinching treatment of the war's ghastly, bloody victims. Mangled limbs, agonised death throes, eviscerated corpses — all of it was fair game for the evening news. The tone of some of the coverage became overtly anti-war.

"It is easier for Americans to stick to the principle of professionalism and objectivity than it is for Russians," Mr. Kiselyov told the magazine Ogoniok.

"They do not need to choose among communism, fascism and democracy of God-knows-what stripe," he said. "Under such conditions, it is hard to remain impartial."

But even as Russian television reporters explored their brave new world of critical war coverage, their efforts seemed imperilled by political turmoil and the growing threats of the state.

That was before the murder.

On March 1, Vladimir Listyev, possibly the only Russian television personality better recognised than Mr. Kiselyov, was gunned down in the entryway of his Moscow apartment.

A talk-show host and interviewer on Ostankino, the main state television channel, Mr. Listyev had been named chief of the new public station that is to succeed Ostankino this spring.

Investigators said his death, a contract killing, may have been connected to his plan to curtail television advertising by cutting out corrupt middlemen.

First the overt threats from the government, and now this. Shaken, Mr. Kiselyov went on the air to denounce Mr. Listyev's murder as an "act of intimidation."

"We have gotten used to human life not being worth even a pinch of tobacco," he said.

Then, addressing his colleagues, he asked: "After all this, will you be able to work as you worked before?"

Or before making a critical comment, he asked, "will you have to think it over 10 times?"

It was a question he might have addressed to himself.

Mr. Kiselyov is in his office, sucking at a packet of anticid powder. It is a habit he has picked up in the past few months, since the war in Chechnya began and the pressure from the government started. Nerves, deadlines, exhaustion — who knows? His stomach is not quite right.

He is 38, with a handsome, rugged, square-

jawed face on which he wears a nearly permanent expression of sobriety, the same one he uses on camera to convey the seriousness of events.

His office is not what you would expect for Russia's premier television news heavyweight. For one thing it is tiny, just big enough for two people to chat and a third to hover in the doorway.

There is only one television, a Samsung with a 12-inch (30-centimetre) screen. A few press cards are strung up on a peg on the cork-paneled wall. On the desk is a coffee mug that says "The Boss."

In fact, Mr. Kiselyov lives very well indeed. There is the company dacha, the cellular phone, plenty of travel abroad.

But perks and privileges do not occupy much attention at NTV these days. There are more basic questions to consider: How assured is the whole enterprise of television journalism in Russia? Will the government continue to tolerate hard-nosed reporting? How carefully must NTV tread? How will it fare under whatever regime follows Mr. Yeltsin's?

Mr. Kiselyov, among others, does not believe the Kremlin feels any great commitment to media freedom.

Mr. Kiselyov, born in Moscow, came to journalism almost by accident, but his timing could not have

been better.

The son of an aviation engineer, he went to Moscow State University, studied Persian, and worked briefly in Iran and then in Afghanistan during the war as an interpreter with the Soviet Army.

Back in Moscow, he was teaching Persian at the KGB academy, and his career was going nowhere.

He was not a member of the Communist Party. He was rebuffed when he expressed an interest in an intelligence career. He wanted to leave his job, but was warned that quitting the KGB could be interpreted as a dangerous act of disloyalty.

After three years at the KGB academy, Mr. Kiselyov found a job at Radio Moscow's Persian Service in 1984. It was a start in journalism, and he loved it.

Three years later, as reporting and journalism opportunities were flowering in the era of glasnost, a college friend helped him get a job at Ostankino, the main state-owned television channel.

Mr. Kiselyov found it was a perfect time to be a fresh face on the air. He was the first Soviet television journalist to report from Israel. He became a fixture as correspondent and part-time host on a string of new and expanded shows.

In early 1991, he jumped to the newly created Russian Television and Radio

station, where he was one of two anchors on the late evening news. But after a few months he returned to Ostankino, enticed by the chance to create and run a new kind of show — a weekly wrap-up of news reports, interviews, analysis and features with a heavy tilt towards insider politics.

Mr. Kiselyov insisted that he be the only anchor as well as the editor. "Itogi" went on the air in January 1992 and was an almost immediate success.

After little more than a year, though, Russia's political turmoil seemed to threaten the show. Ostankino's top managers, including Mr. Kiselyov's patrons, were fired by Mr. Yeltsin, who wanted more favourable coverage of his struggle with Russian parliament.

Mr. Kiselyov and a colleague decided they needed some distance from Ostankino — their own equipment, their own premises — to produce "Itogi" independently.

Seeking a patron, in 1993 they approached Vladimir Gusinsky, head of the Most Group, a holding company that had built a fortune in banking and real estate... Mr. Gusinsky, among the richest men in Russia, heard their proposal and went to the top.

"He said, 'You'd better start a station.' We weren't even thinking of something so ambitious," Mr. Kisely-

ov said. "But he said, 'Be realistic. If 'Itogi' becomes independent, they won't let you operate on a state-run channel.'"

Mr. Kiselyov launched a lobbying campaign to win approval for the independent station, arguing that Ostankino's own efforts at pro-Yeltsin propaganda were ham-handed and counterproductive.

There was an available station, Channel 4, where the government dumped its worst shows. Channel 4's ratings were terrible, and the government lost money on it. Why not let an independent outfit have a try, they argued.

It was Mr. Yeltsin himself who approved the creation of NTV, in December 1993. His decision came shortly after parliamentary elections in which democrats and reformers loyal to the president were trounced.

The elections were a disaster for Mr. Yeltsin despite the government's monopoly control of televised news, and perhaps the president saw some hope in the idea of an independent television channel.

Just 16 months later, the irony is that NTV's success has come largely at Mr. Yeltsin's expense. After an initial injection of \$15 million from Mr. Gusinsky, the station now says it roughly breaks even.

The Washington Post.

7 Israelis killed in blasts

(Continued from page 1)

strongly condemned the attack, which occurred while U.S. mediator Dennis Ross was in the region to help move peace talks forward.

"We are committed to confronting terrorism. These people are the enemies of peace," Mr. Arafat said. "We call this peace the peace of the courageous, and we need courage to confront them."

The bus, en route to Israel, was attacked about noon (0900 GMT) near Kfar Darom, a fenced-in settlement near the Palestinian town of Deir Al Balah.

Riyad Al Khidra, a merchant who was several hundred metres from the scene, said he saw a blue vehicle try to overtake the bus.

All of a sudden there was a big explosion and the vehicle blew up," said Mr. Khidra, who said there appeared to be two people in the vehicle that tried to pass the bus.

Helicopters soon arrived to evacuate the wounded. Hospital officials said there were 34 people wounded although President Ezer Weizman said 42 were hurt.

Reporters at the scene of the second explosion — which was described by army radio as a suicide car bomb — saw the smoking remains of an Israeli army jeep. Two other cars with yellow Israeli license plates were nearby.

but there was no sign of the vehicle reportedly used as a car bomb.

Islamic Jihad named the bomber as Khaled Mahmoud al Khatib, 24, of Gaza's Nusseirat refugee camp. It said he belonged to the same group which blew up 21 Israeli soldiers and a civilian at Israel's Beit Lid junction in January.

U.S. President Bill Clinton issued a statement, pledging "all possible efforts" to achieve peace despite the bloodshed.

"Once more, the enemies of peace have resorted to violence against innocent citizens of Israel. But those responsible must not and shall not be allowed to deny a better future of hope and reconciliation to the region," Mr. Clinton said.

In Washington, U.S. Vice-President Al Gore said Washington expects Mr. Arafat to help find those responsible for the bombings.

Asked in a television interview if Washington would insist that PLO leader help in efforts to stop such attacks, Mr. Gore said "yes."

Mr. Gore said that when he met with Mr. Arafat a few weeks ago "he gave a commitment that they — the Palestinian authorities — will begin prosecutions" of those believed responsible for earlier such attacks.

King's talks highly positive

(Continued from page 1)

cess, although it will not be on the same vehicle that we had expected it to be."

The foreign minister said King Hussein also reviewed with President Clinton and other senior administration officials as well as members of Congress the overall status of the Middle East peace process.

The meetings included a review of "what is happening in the Jordanian-Israeli track" after the two countries signed a peace treaty in October, the foreign minister said.

The discussions also covered "prospects for progress" in the Israeli-Palestinian, Israeli-Syrian and Israeli-Lebanese tracks of the 54-month old peace process. Mr. Kabarti said, noting that a state of peace in the entire Middle East region was "conditional" on equitable agreements between Israel and all Arab parties involved in the negotiations.

Also reviewed was the situation of Iraq, which is straining under international sanctions, and "how bad things are" for its 18 million people. Mr. Kabarti said without elaboration.

Jordan has been calling for an easing of the sanctions, pointing out the people were the victims of the sanctions, which have cut off all foreign

revenues of the Iraqi government.

Mr. Kabarti did not say how the U.S. leaders responded to the Jordanian call.

In most cases when the plight of the Iraqi people is raised as an issue, Washington usually refers to U.N. offers to Iraq for limited oil sales under controlled conditions to raise funds to meet the emergency food and medicine needs of the Iraqi people.

The offers have not been accepted by Iraq, which says the conditions attached to the sales infringe on its sovereignty.

In Washington, the King also discussed Jordan's role in international peacekeeping operations and "how to strengthen this role," Mr. Kabarti said.

During his 12-day in the United States, the King received several awards for his contribution to peace in the Middle East, addressed gatherings at the Simon Wiesenthal Centre, the Ronald Reagan Centre, and the Los Angeles World Affairs Council, and met with American Arab and American leaders, including the Conference of the Presidents of Major American Jewish Organisations, before starting a state visit to Canada on Thursday.

Ross briefs Egyptian president

(Continued from page 1)

gaged in the argument over the verbal understandings that are supposed to provide a basis for the talks on security arrangements."

Mr. Rabinovich told Israel Radio: "Expressions like equality are expressions that take a long time and delay the approach to negotiations themselves."

Israel army radio said Syria was waiting for Israel to agree that security arrangements would be identical on both sides of the border before it agreed to more talks between their chiefs of staff.

"There are a number of

terms that the Syrians are insisting on, some of them that are definitely unacceptable to us," Mr. Rabinovich said on Israel Radio.

The Yedioth Ahronoth daily newspaper reported that Mr. Assad is insisting that a Syrian early warning system be set up in Israel's northern Galilee in response to an Israeli demand for a similar station in the Golan.

The newspaper quoted an unidentified official as saying that if Mr. Assad continued to dictate "a crawling pace" for the negotiations, "we will reach an agreement with Syria only in years."

No date for pullout — Turkey

(Continued from page 1)

riotic Union of Kurdistan (PUK) and the Kurdistan Democratic Party (KDP) — meanwhile agreed to a ceasefire, a move sought by Ankara.

Turkey wants them to

make peace and concentrate on guarding the Turkish-Iraqi border against PKK infiltration.

Ankara hopes for talks with both Iraqi Kurdish factions which have in the past supported Turkey's anti-PKK operations.

Draft election law is ready

(Continued from page 12)

was available. Abdul Karim Dughmi, head of the Judicial Committee in the Lower House of Parliament, claimed that there had been some irregularities in the 1993 elections.

The elections "were not clean and I have ample evidence on that," Mr. Dughmi said.

In reply to Mr. Ayesha's comments, Mr. Hammad said the draft law was not final.

In response to another question on Jordanians living abroad exercising their right to vote, he said the ministry had carried out a study on the issue and will implement it if the appropriate mechanism

was available.

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Shamir presents credentials

(Continued from page 1)

outstanding issues on the Syrian, Lebanese and Palestinian tracks."

The minister stressed that Jordan considered a resolution of the problems of Palestinian refugees, Jerusalem and Jewish settlements, "a prerequisite to the establishment of a just, durable and comprehensive peace."

Speaking to reporters following his meeting with Mr. Kabarti, Dr. Shamir said his mission in Jordan was developing bilateral relations "based on our common interests."

The ambassador, speaking fluent Arabic, said he hoped relations between the two states "will positively affect progress in the other tracks in the framework of a comprehensive peace."

Dr. Shamir, who served as his country's first envoy to Egypt, said the way to increase support in Jordan for peace with Israel was "through an open dialogue and patience."

"The only way is open dialogue and patience which we hope that gradually support for this peace will increase," he said. "We understand that in the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, there is political pluralism and different political currents, and we must open dialogue with all parties, with that naturally depending on their readiness for such a dialogue."

Dr. Shamir, who met with Crown Prince Hassan informally after his arrival on Thursday, said he presented to Regent a broad outline of Israel's position on bilateral issues and the peace process in the region.

The new ambassador, who has rented a home in the fashionable area of Abdoun close to the U.S. embassy, said he visited Jerash and downtown Amman on Friday "to get a general idea of the antiquities and history of Jordan, the population and the cities."

The embassy is operating out of the Forte Grand Hotel until permanent premises are found.

Taiwan stresses separateness over unity with China

By James Kynge
Reuters

TAIPEI — There were some nicely turned phrases, some feel-good remarks. But the essence of Taiwan President Lee Teng-Hui's long-awaited speech on reunification with China may inflame rather than mollify Beijing.

Analysts said Saturday's speech, Mr. Lee's reply to an "olive branch" offered by Chinese President Jiang Zemin in January, stressed the separateness of this island more than the reunification upon which Beijing insists.

"Lee's reply was not aimed at promoting the process of reunification," said Lee Hong-Hsi, professor of law at the prestigious National Taiwan University.

"One of the main messages in his speech is that China must recognise Taiwan's de facto independence," Professor Lee

added.

China and Taiwan split in 1949 after Taiwan's ruling nationalists lost a civil war in China and fled to the island. Beijing views Taiwan as a rebel-held province and has not withdrawn a threat to recover it by force.

But since a thaw in the 1980s, the two sides have agreed to negotiate over their differences in a process that Beijing hopes will lead to talks on reunification. Taipei also wants reunification, but on its own very different terms.

Lee Teng-Hui insisted in his speech that China recognise that Taiwan is governed by a political entity separate from Beijing, a position that contradicts Beijing's tenet that it is the sole ruler of one China.

The president demanded that China stop suppressing Taiwan's efforts to forge diplomatic ties with third countries. He also suggested that China cooper-

ate with Taiwan in ensuring democracy in Hong Kong and Macau.

"Democracy for Hong Kong... look at the disputes between Britain and China on that. I don't think that Taiwan's input on this question is going to get rave reviews in Beijing," said a representative at a foreign nation's trade mission in Taipei.

For China, set to recover Hong Kong from Britain in 1997 and Macau from Portugal in 1999, the task of reunifying with Taiwan is an atavistic mission to restore national pride.

But in the short term, Lee Teng-Hui cannot afford to offer concessions to Beijing ahead of parliamentary elections late this year and the island's first-ever presidential polls slated for March, 1996.

Eighty per cent of Taiwan's electorate are native-born Taiwanese with few historical or emotional ties to the mainland.

They are in no hurry to see reunification and the president cannot afford to alienate them.

But for commercial reasons, neither can Taiwan afford to provoke Beijing.

Twenty-five thousand businesses with Taiwan investments are operating on the mainland, without any bilateral protection pacts, and the island is increasingly reliant on China as a key export market.

For this reason Lee Teng-Hui sounded conciliatory notes in his speech. He seized on Jiang's insistence that "Chinese must not fight Chinese" and echoed it as "Chinese should help Chinese."

He then played on the unity of Chinese culture.

"The descendants of the yellow emperor should first be sincere and then not destroy each other's flesh and blood," he said.

Regent

(Continued from page 1)

the ministry's plans regarding decentralisation, municipal elections which will be held July 11 and laws that need to be updated.

Mr. Hammad said draft amendments to the criminal law and laws on public gatherings and traffic were ready.

He added that a study on a new election law was prepared. The study, he said, entailed preparing new voters' lists, giving a national number for every citizen and facilitating voting procedures.

Following the meeting, Mr. Hammad told reporters that the Prince issued directives to the ministry and other government departments to upgrade their services and capabilities.

He said, the ministry will establish a citizens' service office which will operate round the clock.

President of the Aqaba Region Authority Fayez Al Khasawneh also spoke at the meeting of the possibility of establishing comprehensive model villages in Wadi Araba, the Aqaba region and desert areas.

The meeting was attended by the King's advisor, Mohammad Rasoul Al Kilani, Prince Hassan's private advisor Mohammad Al Saqqaf, the Crown Prince's office director Michel Hamameh, Amman Mayor Mamdouh Al Abbadi and other senior officials.

The bizarre world of Japan's doomsday cult

By Eugene Moosa
Reuters

TOKYO — Not everyone might believe in a guru who says he time-travelled to the year 2006, but his followers in Japan pay \$116,000 for "telepathy head gear" just to share visions he says he has experienced.

The estimated 10,000 members of Japan's Aum Shinri Kyo (Supreme Truth Sect) say they even drink tea made from locks of hair of guru Shoko Asahara to enhance such abilities.

The cult is now the target of daily police raids following the March 20 nerve gas attack on Tokyo's subway which killed 11 people and injured thousands. The cult denies any connection to the attacks.

Despite the raids, which have turned up hundreds of tonnes of chemicals, laboratories and secret plants, no formal charges have been made against the sect. Nor have there been any arrests directly linked to the attack.

But what the raids have revealed is that the cult was obsessed with things more dangerous than time-travelling.

Investigators rummaging through the labyrinthine

building of the sect's complex at Kamiku Isshiki, at the foot of Mt. Fuji west of Tokyo, were silent on exact details of what they found.

But most agreed on one thing. "This is no police matter. This is a national security issue," as one put it.

Day after day, the Japanese public have been fed hours of television footage and newspaper coverage of the details of the bizarre world of the Aum Sect.

Some aspects, like its pyramid structure resembling a national government, was straight out of pulp fiction. Its "defence ministry" guarded the premises and kept an eye on would-be escapees. Its "science ministry" ran chemical plants.

Other aspects bordered on the incredible. It repeatedly accused the U.S. military of spraying nerve gas on the cult complex from airplanes. It said cellular phones were actually devices used in a government plot to control people's minds.

Religious commentators said Asahara attracted his following from Japan's youth by appealing to their interest in the supernatural

and the occult.

His key prediction is that the world as we know it would end in 1997 in an "Armageddon" of nerve gas and biological wars.

In 1992, he predicted a nuclear war would break out and forced his followers to move to Okinawa. Nothing happened.

In last December's issue of the sect's monthly magazine entitled "Great Prophecy: The Shuddering End of the Century," Asahara said he travelled to the world in the year 2006 and talked to residents who said world war three was over. "I asked the people around me what year it was," Asahara wrote in the magazine. "They said it was the year 2006. Man-kind had already experienced world war three."

In a strange contrast to such far-fetched claims, the sect has displayed an extremely realistic attitude over money. It demands that a devoted follower wishing to live in its ascetic community give every penny he or she has to the sect, including house, land and life savings. The sect wants everything, and that includes stamps in desk drawers and telephone cards.

Gulf oil gain offset by weak dollar

ABU DHABI (AFP) — An improvement in oil prices will inject more cash into the ailing coffers of Arab Gulf governments but the increase will likely be offset by higher import bills due to the weak dollar, economists have said.

As crude prices climbed last week to around \$18, their highest level in eight months, the dollar sank to new record lows against major currencies, pushing down the value of most Gulf currencies that are effectively pegged to it.

A one dollar increase in oil prices means nearly \$340 million a month and around \$3 billion a year in extra revenue for the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC), said Mohammed Al Asoumi, chief economist at the state-controlled Emirates Industrial Bank.

"Such an increase will naturally help the GCC budgets but the impact will be minimised by the decline in the U.S. dollar since this means they will pay more for their imports of goods and services," he told AFP.

Despite intervention by the U.S. Treasury, the dollar

continued its plunge to hit a new record low of 83.65 Japanese yen on Friday. It also dropped to 1.374 German marks and 4.79 French francs.

Oil exports are priced in the U.S. dollar and its decline over the past decade has combined with weak crude prices to create persistent economic problems for the GCC countries, including a sharp slowdown in growth rates and deficits in their budgets and balances of payments.

According to the Kuwaiti-based Organisation of Arab Petroleum Exporting Countries (OAPEC), current oil prices were equivalent to \$6 in real terms in 1973 due to the deteriorating purchasing power of the greenback.

"The latest improvement in oil prices is a good news to GCC states but the question is whether the improvement will continue and the dollar will regain its strength," said Yusuf Khalifa, economics professor at the Emirates University. "If this happens, then it will largely help their budgets."

GCC states — Saudi Ara-

bia, Bahrain, Qatar, Kuwait, Oman and the United Arab Emirates (UAE) — have been trying to tackle their budget shortfalls by cutting expenditure after years of generous spending.

Such cuts enabled them to slash their combined 1995 budget deficit to around \$9.63 billion from \$17.3 billion in 1994 and a record \$61.2 billion in 1991, when they contributed more than \$65 billion to a U.S.-led campaign to eject Iraqi invasion forces from Kuwait.

Spending was projected at \$68.79 billion in 1995 compared with \$71.45 billion in 1994 and as high as \$124 billion in 1991.

GCC states produce nearly 13 million barrels per day (b/d) of oil, accounting for more than 80 per cent of their income. Despite attempts at diversification, they remain heavily reliant on imports.

Official GCC estimates showed imports by the six members averaged around \$5.5 billion a month in the first quarter of 1995, with more than 80 per cent coming from Japan and the European Union.

The figure did not include services but GCC states suffered from a deficit in the services balance of nearly \$30 billion in 1994, according to the estimates.

The Kuwaiti dinar is the only GCC currency which is not pegged to the U.S. dollar but the greenback has the lion share in the basket of currencies covering the dinar.

Mr. Asoumi said the GCC states were also making "less profits from investment abroad and their currencies are also losing value because most of them are linked to the dollar."

The steady weakening in the dollar has prompted calls for detaching it from GCC currencies and oil prices.

"Time has come for revising the pricing of raw material, including oil, to protect the economies of crude exporting countries from the sharp fluctuations in the world financial markets," UAE minister of state for financial and industrial affairs, Ahmad Al Tayer, said last month, adding the GCC finance, oil and foreign ministers would meet in May to discuss the issue.

Abu Dhabi to privatise non-oil industries

ABU DHABI (AFP) — The Gulf emirate of Abu Dhabi will start selling its non-oil industrial sector to the public this year within reforms to minimise the damage of low oil prices, officials have said.

The General Industry Corporation (GIC), which runs the emirate's non-oil industries, said it would initially sell 80 per cent of five key factories with a total capital of around 722 million dirhams (\$196.7 million).

"Our plan is to sell 80 per cent in the first stage and the remaining 20 per cent will be sold later," GIC chief executive, Adam Mahdi, told AFP. "Privatisation will begin in the second half of this year and we expect strong demand as liquidity is high and the factories are profitable."

The factories include two cement plants worth 600 million dirhams (\$163.4 million), a flour mill, and two mineral water and bags factories.

Mr. Mahdi said return from the sale of those facilities would be used by GIC in

setting up bigger factories, including a steel plant worth hundreds of millions of dirhams (dollars) and other capital intensive projects.

He said such factories would be managed by the state-owned GIC for a limited period of time before being sold to the public.

"The factories we are selling are highly profitable and investors could earn as much as 10 to 15 per cent in return on shares," he said. "The sale is part of a new policy aimed at expanding the small non-oil industrial base in the emirate and diversifying the economy. The only way is that we establish large industrial projects which need high capital and technology and sell them gradually to the citizens."

He said the sale of industrial units would also help "distribute the wealth among UAE citizens, upgrade performance, increase the national income and boost the contribution of that sector in the gross domestic product (GDP)."

Abu Dhabi is the main oil producer in the United Arab Emirates (UAE), with an output of around 80 per cent of the total production of nearly 2.16 million barrels per day. It also controls more than 90 per cent of the UAE's total crude reserve of around 98 billion barrels.

Like other Gulf oil producers, Abu Dhabi has been hit by the decline in oil prices and the dollar, the official price of crude exports. Most regional governments have announced reform plans to offset such a decline.

Apart from privatisation, GIC is planning to set up three major industrial zones and has earmarked around 100 million dirhams (\$27.2 million) in soft loans to potential investors in those zones.

A GIC study said it expected such projects to push up the GDP in Abu Dhabi's non-oil industrial sector from 5.58 billion dirhams (\$1.52 billion) in 1993 to 11.1 billion dirhams (\$3.02 billion) in

1998 and 20.9 billion dirhams (\$5.69 billion) in 2008.

The UAE's non-oil industrial sector has steadily grown over the past few years to exceed 1,000 units producing mainly cement, textile and garments, foodstuffs, chemicals, paper and other light products.

Its GDP grew from around 9.7 billion dirhams (\$2.64 billion) in 1990 to around 11 billion dirhams (\$2.99 billion) in 1994, accounting for nearly 8.4 per cent of the total GDP of \$35.8 billion.

Investment in the non-oil sector rose from 3.9 billion dirhams (\$1.06 billion) in 1991 to 4.72 billion dirhams (\$1.28 billion) in 1992 and around five billion dirhams (\$1.36 billion) in 1993.

"Privatisation of the non-oil industries will relieve GIC from the burden of managing factories and enable it to concentrate on a far-reaching industrial strategy that will help in diversifying income sources," Mr. Mahdi said.

Morocco considering early debt repayment

RABAT (R) — Morocco is considering ways of repaying part of its \$21 billion external debt ahead of schedule, but the modalities have yet to be worked out, Finance Minister Mohammed Kabbaj has said.

"We will be discussing with Bank Al Maghreb (central bank) and other commercial banks how we can do so but we have no fixed amount in mind," Mr. Kabbaj told Reuters in an interview.

He also said there were no plans at present to issue Eurobonds as suggested in a recent report but that swapping debt for equity was under consideration.

Mr. Kabbaj said Morocco had not succeeded in swapping debt for equity in the past when it offered to exchange for equity \$50 million of its debt. Morocco with-

drew the offer after six months because there were no offers.

Mr. Kabbaj also said an interbank market would be in place within a few months on the way to full dirham convertibility.

"At present the dirham is fully convertible for trade but it is not fully convertible in terms of capital flows. In the next few months, we will move to the next stage and that is the interbank market on the way to full convertibility we hope within one year or two at the most," he said.

Mr. Kabbaj also told a news conference here that this would eventually lead to a foreign exchange market but there were no plans to devalue despite the devaluation of some European currencies.

He said the dirham was pegged to a basket which included European and non-European currencies and the devaluation of the Spanish peseta and the Italian lira had created problems.

While admitting that Morocco faced economic difficulties because of a lower than expected cereals harvest and tough competition for its agricultural imports within the European Union, Mr. Kabbaj gave no indication how Morocco intended to repay its debt ahead of schedule and keep the budget in balance.

He said Morocco was committed to meeting all its domestic and international obligations. Debt servicing amounted to \$3.3 billion representing 30.3 per cent of total government spending.

Parliament approved a budget of 109.8 billion dirhams (\$13.2 billion) for 1995.

Mr. Kabbaj said there were no plans to revise the 1995 budget because of the drought but he said keeping within spending limits would require strict discipline.

He said the cereals harvest for 1995 was expected to be as low as 2.5 million tonnes, compared with 9.4 million tonnes in 1994 when Morocco had an above average harvest.

Independent analysts say the country is likely to experience zero to negative growth in 1995 because of the drought. The government had forecast growth of between 2.5 and four per cent for 1993.

Battered sterling faces fresh political test

LONDON (R) — Punch-drunk sterling faces fresh hurdles in coming weeks with local elections in England and Wales likely to raise the political temperature and do further damage to the battered pound.

With the mark and yen slugging it out for foreign exchange supremacy sterling is at the moment simply being knocked about by what is going on elsewhere, analysts said.

But sterling could again start dropping of its own accord if John Major's ruling conservatives are trounced in the May local elections, they said.

"I think sterling is an accident waiting to happen and it's always wobbly around local election time," said David Coleman, chief economist at CIBC Wood Gundy. "Last year the market may have shrugged off the

result but this year we are one year nearer the general election."

Mr. Major's deeply unpopular Conservatives were virtually wiped off the political map in Scotland as opposition Labour swept the board in Thursday's elections for new local councils.

Such a result was expected and sterling ignored the news.

The pound was trading slightly higher at 2.2160 marks on Friday, three pence clear of its all-time low of 2.1890 recorded in mid-March. On the dollar, it was at \$1.61 per pound, up slightly from Thursday's \$1.6075.

But dealers said a further bad showing for the Conservatives in May could raise speculation of a leadership challenge to John Major, which would frighten overseas investors in particular. "It's not so much any par-

ticular moment when you see panics out of sterling. It's more a long slow process of attrition," said Robin Aspinall, strategist at Panmure Gordon.

"If you put money into sterling or you don't hedge it no one is going to forgive you and you will lose your job," he said. "People will point the finger at you and say you knew about the politics didn't you, how could you have done that?"

This means that sterling is basically swimming upstream the whole time. When things are going in its favour it makes slow progress but when things go wrong it gets swept back a long way.

Its recent battering has pushed it down to within a whisker of its all-time trade-weighted low of \$4.0, a level reached in the wake of the 1992 sterling crisis.

Its steep fall in trade-weighted terms has effectively loosened monetary policy to the extent that even including the last half-point rise in base rates to 6.75 per cent, monetary policy is now around 0.25-point looser.

This could pose a problem for a beleaguered government which is looking to make vote-winning tax cuts ahead of the general election. A lax fiscal policy would not get well with the current looser monetary position, analysts noted.

Strong yen seen bringing windfall gains to South Korea

SEOUL (AFP) — South Korea stands to reap windfall gains from the surging Japanese yen, whose appreciation against the won is expected to boost the growth rate of the local economy, analysts said.

The rising Japanese currency sent South Korea's won crashing to an all-time low Saturday, with the basic rate set at 919.55 won to 100 yen, smashing the earlier record of 905.04 set on Friday.

"The high yen is good news for us, because one of the biggest beneficiaries of the yen appreciation is South Korea," said Kim Kyong-Won, top economist with

Samsung Economic Research Institute.

"The high yen makes Japanese products more expensive than South Korean substitutes in overseas markets," Mr. Kim told AFP.

The won has now shed about 13 per cent of its value against the yen since the end of last year. Against the dollar, the won moved in the opposite direction, rising 2.1 per cent in value during the same period.

As a consequence of taking Japanese firms as their benchmark during their industrial restructuring from 1989 to 1992, South Korean firms have ended up having a stri-

kingly similar production line-up to Japanese counterparts.

"In many cases, South Korea is the best and only replacement of Japanese suppliers for foreign buyers, especially for home appliances, electronics, automobiles, steel and shipbuilding," Mr. Kim said.

A state economic think-tank said last week if the yen strengthens 10 per cent against the won and the South Korean currency appreciates two per cent against the U.S. dollar, exports will increase an extra 3.76 percentage points.

"In this scenario, the eco-

nomy will grow an extra 1.1 percentage points," said analyst Ohn Ki-Wun of the Korea Institute for Industrial Economics and Technology (KIET) at a seminar on economic effects of the strong yen.

South Korea's gross domestic product — the total value of goods and services produced in the country — grew a robust 8.4 per cent last year, pushing per-capita GDP to a record \$8,483.

Finance and Economy Minister Hong Jae-Hyong said that price stability is a major policy goal this year, adding that the government will try to contain the econo-

mic growth rate to around seven per cent.

Analysts said automobiles, shipbuilding, iron and steel, electronics and semiconductors stand to benefit most from the strong yen.

Under the KIET yen-appreciation scenario, South Korea's exports of cars will increase 2.92 per cent, shipbuilding 2.8 per cent, semiconductors 2.06 per cent, machines 2.91 per cent, and iron and steel 1.36 per cent.

Exports of textiles and garments will rise 3.18 per cent, home appliances 8.7 per cent, and computers 8.12 per cent. Mr. Ohn said.

The Korea Foreign Trade

Association said a 10 per cent yen rise will result in an extra \$1.762 billion in exports and an additional \$821 million in imports for a \$941 million improvement in the trade balance.

Economists said cost of debt service will also be reduced because South Korea has more dollar-denominated foreign debt than yen-denominated loans.

But a high yen will widen South Korea's chronic trade deficit with Japan, on which South Korea heavily depends for new plant investment and equipment.

HOROSCOPE

FORECAST FOR MONDAY APRIL 10, 1995

By Thomas S. Pierson, Astrologer, Carroll Righter Foundation

ARIES: (March 21 to April 19) Get bills and accounts cleared up today before you tackle anything else of a practical nature. Safeguard your wallet so you do not run out.

TAURUS: (April 20 to May 20) You can conclude pending agreements today with others and then adopt the right attitude so that you can carry them through.

GEMINI: (May 21 to June 21) You can get that work plan started early this morning and then arrange for more public outlets. Be active and happy with close friends and associates.

MOON CHILDREN: (June 22 to July 21) Early get appointments set up for recreation later today and then plunge into the tasks ahead of you and polish them off.

LEO: (July 22 to August 21) Give that situation at home more thought in the morning, and then you can go out for the recreation which you like very much.

VIRGO: (August 22 to September 22) Early this morning handle all that desk activities which need your attention and later tonight be with your loved ones at activities which are mutually liked.

LIBRA: (September 23 to October 22) Financial affairs are easily handled in the morning, and later today you can talk over problems you may have with associates.

SCORPIO: (October 23 to November 21) Early today handle personal affairs which have been neglected and then make big headway in practical affairs you do desire.

SAGITTARIUS: (November 22 to December 21) Early this morning you should busy yourself figuring out how to gain your greatest objectives and then tonight follow through with your ideas.

CAPRICORN: (December 22 to January 20) A friend can give you fine advice today which should be followed in order to gain some cherished aim you truly desire.

AQUARIUS: (January 21 to February 19) Handle the duties which are important early this morning and they are soon behind you so that you can enjoy this evening.

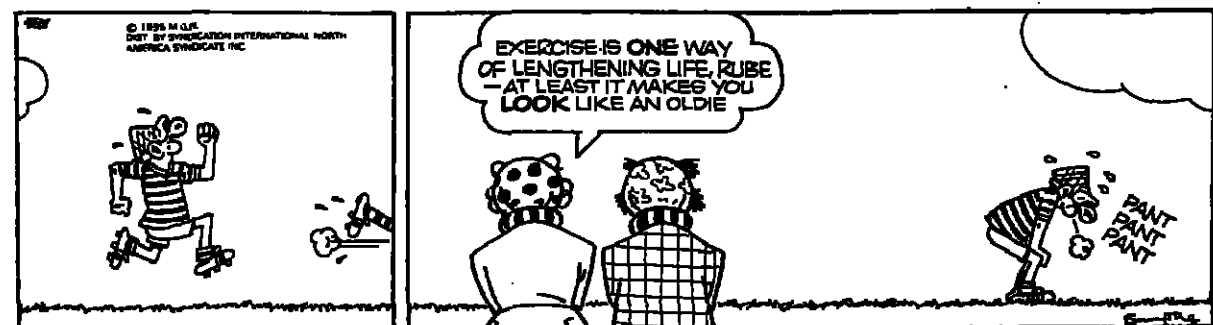
PISCES: (February 20 to March 20) Study into different methods of operating and then confer with a higher-up to gain the backing you need for the success of a project.

Birthstone of April: Diamond — Amethyst

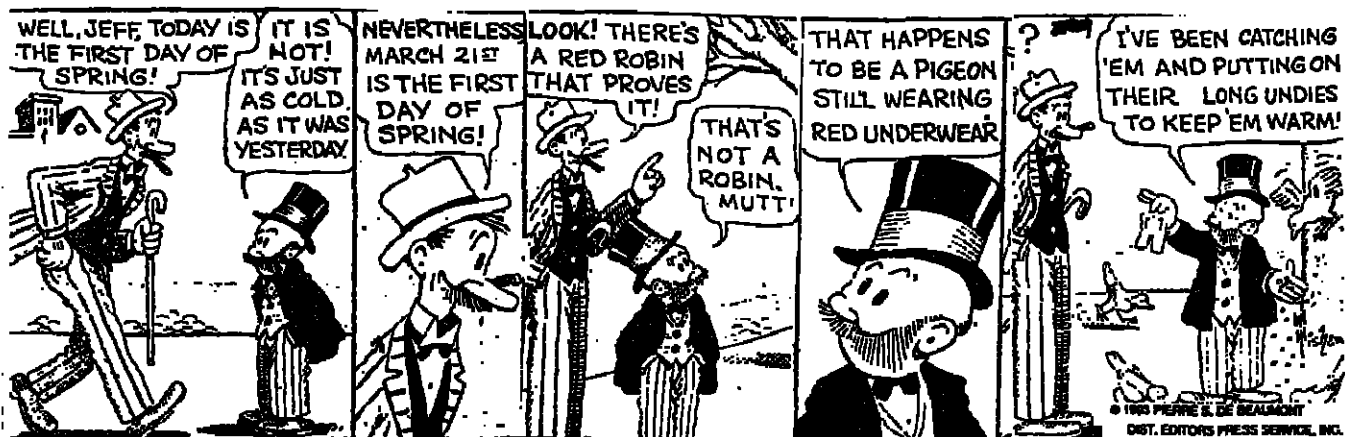
Peanuts



Andy Capp



Mutt'n'Jeff



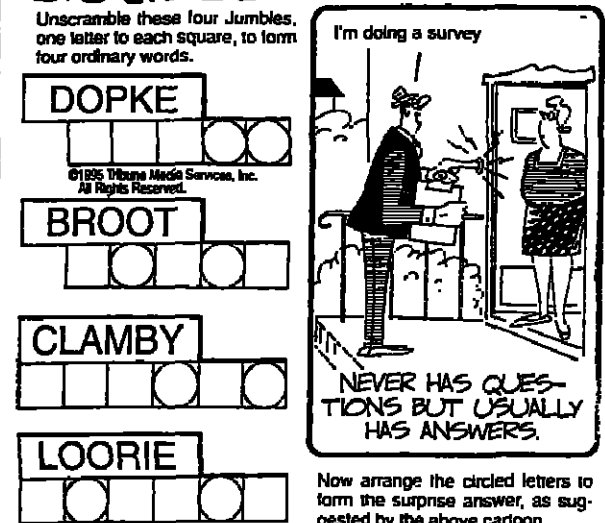
THE BETTER HALF

By Glasbergen



JUMBLE

Unscramble these four Jumbles, one letter to each square, to form four ordinary words.



Print answer here: A

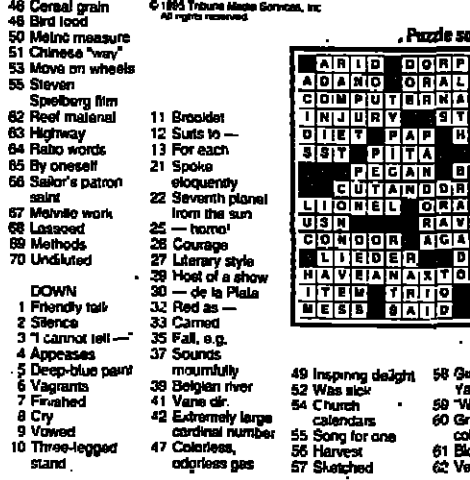
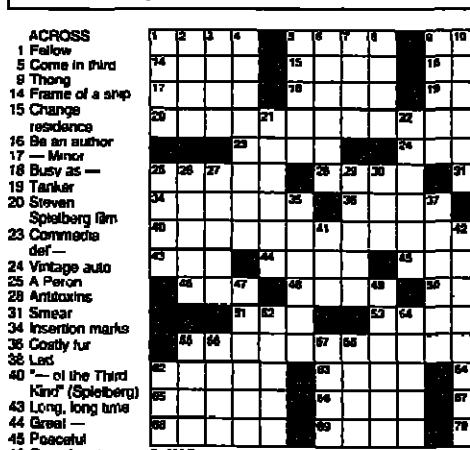
(Answers Monday)

Yesterday's Jumbles: GAVEL PUPIL BECAME NAPKIN

Answer: How Rover behaved at the neighborhood party — LIKE AN ANIMAL

THE Daily Crossword

by Dorothy B. Martin



AFM on recovery course

By a Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — Final figures for trading and prices at the Amman Financial Market (AFM) for the month of March released Sunday indicated that the bourse is on a recovery course after a short period of stagnation, and the upward trend is likely to continue, brokers said.

Prices slipped a little during the month, but have picked up since then, they noted. The AFM report said stocks worth JD 37.5 million changed hands during March, a 130 per cent increase over the JD 16.3 million turnover posted in February. Average daily trading during March was JD 2.2 million compared with the previous month's JD 800,000.

Brokers noted that trading during the Holy Month of Ramadan — which fell in February this year — usually tends to be low, but they said that since the middle of March investors appeared to

have taken new interest despite a liquidity crisis.

The recovery was mainly attributed to what investors saw as the success of His Majesty King Hussein's talks with U.S. President Bill Clinton and other senior officials as well as American legislatures in Washington in the last week of the month.

The AFM report said the general share price index closed for the month after losing 1.9 points or 1.3 per cent.

The index closed at 141.77 points on Wednesday, March 29, the last day of trading for the month. It gained 4.7 points, or 3.3 per cent, in the first week of April to close at 146.54 points on Saturday.

The AFM report said that in March an average of 700,000 shares changed hands compared with 400,000 in February. Total number of shares traded during the month was 12.6 million shares under 14,300 deals, a rise of 70.3 per cent and 15.3

per cent respectively over the previous month.

Commercial banks and financial institutions accounted for 17.1 million dinars or 46 per cent of the monthly volume, followed by service sector stock with JD 9.8 million (26 per cent), industrials with JD 9 million (24 per cent) and insurance firms with JD 1.5 million (four per cent).

As trading for the month closed, the sectoral indices showed that industrials shed an average of 3.5 points or 2.8 per cent, insurance stock dropped by 1.7 point or 1.2 per cent, commercial banks one point or 0.6 per cent and services stock 0.01 point or 0.01 per cent.

March was a "good month" for brokers but "not so good" for investors, commented a market analyst, noting that brokers collected their commission on every deal while investors saw prices plunge to a record low since 1992.

According to brokers, the

surge in prices and investors interest could be attributed to a combination of factors, starting with King Hussein's visit to Washington, institutional intervention to prop up prices, and announcement of better-than-expected annual figures by some companies.

"The market would have done much better had it not been for the liquidity crisis resulting from high interest rates," commented the analyst, commenting to a drain on the capital in the market after commercial banks started offering higher yields on short-term deposits.

Brokers, noting that the rise in prices in the services sector in the first week of April came after Jordan and Israel signed an agreement on cooperation in tourism, said they expected the upward swing in the market to slow down this week.

"Prices may not fall this week, but the trend is towards a controlled but stable rise," commented a market dealer.

UAE urges Arabs to reject M.E. bank idea

ABU DHABI (AFP) — The United Arab Emirates (UAE) Sunday urged Arab finance and economy ministers to reject proposals for a Middle East bank to fund regional development ahead of a meeting this week.

Minister of state for financial and industrial affairs, Ahmad Al Tayar, repeated his opposition to the proposal saying it would hurt Arab economies and serve only Israel's interests.

"The bank is not in the interest of Arab economies as it will not only provide funds but will open the Arab markets for Israeli capital, labour,

industries and services and link the Arab economy to that of Israel," he was quoted as saying by the official UAE news agency WAM.

"The projects which are being proposed for the Middle East will adversely affect joint Arab action. During the meeting of the Arab finance ministers, there should be an emphasis on joint work so the achievements we have made are not turned into programs that do not serve Arab development," he stressed.

Finance and economy ministers as well as central bank governors from the 22-member Arab League are

due to hold annual talks in Oman on Tuesday to discuss the 1994 activities of their five main financial institutions.

They are the Abu Dhabi-based Arab Monetary Fund, the Arab Fund for Economic and Social Development, the Arab Corporation for Investment Guarantee, the Khartoum-based Arab Bank for Economic Development in Africa and the Arab Authority for Agricultural Development and Investment.

The five institutions had more than \$10 billion in capital and their operations have exceeded \$26 billion since they were launched in the early 1970s to support development in member states.

Israel and the United States have floated the idea

of a Middle East Development Bank with a capital of about \$5 billion to finance development and reconstruction in the region. But they have also encountered opposition from European countries.

Other proposals include creating a Middle East market that could envelop Israel, Arabs, Iran and Turkey.

"The Middle East market and related concepts and ideas will greatly harm Arab economies. The development bank is ostensibly a bank but its real objectives will not serve the Arab economies," Mr. Tayar said. "Such issues should be discussed by the Arab finance and economy ministers to identify its effects which threaten joint Arab action."

Petra Bank liquidation committee collects JD 119.5 m of debts

★ THE COMMITTEE entrusted with the liquidation of the former Petra Bank held 339 meetings between July 21, 1990 and Nov. 30, 1994 during which it took 4,249 decisions on various aspects of the liquidation process. Following are the most important results achieved:

1) Out of a total of 33,155 debit accounts as of Aug. 2, 1989; 24,464 accounts have been settled completely and 8,691 are still being liquidated.

2) Total indebtedness to the bank as of Aug. 2, 1989 was JD 215 million of which only JD 99 million were expected to be repaid. Doubtful loans were estimated at JD 116 million.

3) Actual amounts collected of these loans were JD 119.5 million and it is expected that an additional JD 50 million will be collected in due course.

4) Until Nov. 11, 1994, the liquidation committee repaid JD 107.6 million of Petra Bank indebtedness to the Central Bank of Jordan (CBJ) incurred as a result of the CBJ paying Petra depositors. The Central Bank is still a creditor to Petra Bank for JD 241.8 million. A further JD 10 million amount was to have been prior to the end of 1994.

5) At various dates, 297 lots of lands owned by the bank were sold for JD 14.9 million.

6) At various dates, 14.9 million shares were sold for JD 11.7 million at a loss of JD 1.85 million.

7) Accumulated earnings during the liquidation process amounted to JD 28.9 million until Nov. 30, 1994. Expenditures amounted to JD 11.2 million netting the liquidation committee a JD 17.7 million net income (Al Aswaq).

★ THE NATIONAL telecommunications programme aims at providing 216,398 new telephone lines by 1998. The new lines will be available through 2 modern exchanges spread throughout the Kingdom with the Municipality of Greater Amman getting 93,200 lines. The total cost of the scheme is estimated at JD 205 million. In addition to the national programme, the Telecommunications Corporation (TCC) is currently implementing expansion projects at Abdali, Madaba, Zarqa, Aqaba, Salt, Irbid and Jerash exchanges. The expansion at Abdali will add new 5,000 numbers to the exchange.

In 1994, the TCC installed 16,868 new telephone lines, of which 10,931 lines were in the Greater Amman area. At the end of December there were 303,593 telephone lines throughout the Kingdom. The Greater Amman area accounted for 197,161 lines of the total (Al Ra'i + Al Dustour).

★ NET PROFIT of the Yarmouk Insurance and Reinsurance Company amounted to JD 268,000 last year, a 16 per cent drop from the previous year. The company earned JD 110,000 from insurance operations and JD 317,000 from various investments. The company, which had total assets of JD 4.3 million at the end of 1994, is starting construction of a building, at a cost of JD 1 million, opposite King Abdullah Gardens. The board of directors is recommending dividends at a rate of 20 per cent (Al Ra'i).

★ THE COUNCIL of Ministers decided to stop all imports of olive oil from the West Bank. The decision was taken to protect Jordanian olive oil production after more than 50,000, 5-kilogramme containers came from the West Bank as gifts. Jordan continues to allow and facilitate its own exports of olive oil (Al Ra'i).

AMMAN FINANCIAL MARKET				
HOUSING BANK CENTER - AMMAN - JORDAN				
TELEPHONE: 660170 / 663170				
ORGANIZED MARKET SHARE PRICE LIST FOR SUNDAY 09/04/1995				
COMPANY'S NAME	NO. OF SHARES TRADED	VALUE TRADED JD	PREV. CLOSING PRICE	CHANGING PRICE
ARAB BANK PLC	1220	335660	195.000	193.500
JORDAN NATIONAL BANK	24200	118735	4.800	4.850
JORDAN NATIONAL BANK / NEW	3267	15509	4.650	4.720
BANK OF JORDAN	850	2260	3.400	3.470
MIDDLE EAST INVESTMENT BANK	400	760	1.490	1.520
INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT BANK	14425	38601	2.680	2.680
THE HOUSING BANK	29800	196754	6.420	6.650
JORDAN KOWAT BANK	6710	19566	2.920	2.920
JORDAN GULF BANK	8300	11598	1.460	1.390
JORDAN INVESTMENT BANK	1900	6650	3.380	3.500
ARAB JORDAN INVESTMENT BANK	14352	55283	3.870	3.850
BUSINESS BANK	3400	12172	3.590	3.580
JORDAN INVESTMENT & FINANCE BANK	2550	10050	3.960	3.960
JEIT KHALD SAVINGS INVESTMENT FOR HOUSING	450	1440	3.200	3.200
AMMAN BANK FOR INVESTMENT	66300	83418	1.280	1.260
PHILADELPHIA INVESTMENT BANK	61295	95663	1.590	1.580
BANKS SECTOR	239819	1004121	INDEX NUMBER: 166.48	CHANGE: -0.33%
JORDAN INSURANCE	1000	3250	3.200	3.250
JORDANIAN SEAS INSURANCE	100	925	1.850	1.850
JORDAN FRENCH INSURANCE	24950	70538	2.800	2.810
DELTA INSURANCE	500	1200	2.320	2.400
INSURANCE SECTOR	26950	75913	INDEX NUMBER: 136.76	CHANGE: +0.57%
JORDANIAN ELECTRIC POWER	5875	9654	1.660	1.640
JORDANIAN ELECTRIC POWER / NEW	15324	25464	1.570	1.590
ARAB INTERNATIONAL HOTELS	22490	168719	7.600	7.480
ARAB INTERNATIONAL HOTELS / NEW	4292	31542	7.450	7.370
JORDAN NATIONAL SHIPPING LINES	2250	6703	2.930	2.920
NATIONAL PORTFOLIO SECURITIES	1461	3419	2.380	2.320
REAL ESTATE INVESTMENT	92580	112582	1.180	1.130
UNIVERSAL MIDDLE EAST & COMMERCE HOTELS	44050	120038	2.800	2.700
ARAB CENTER FOR INVESTMENT & EDUCATION	3950	13098	3.360	3.320
JORDANIAN EXPATRIATES INVESTMENT HOLDING	4600	9936	1.300	1.300
SERVICES SECTOR	197842	498155	INDEX NUMBER: 143.17	CHANGE: -1.43%
ATKINSON CORP. MATERIAL MANUFACTURING	700	788	1.170	1.120
THE JORDAN CEMENT FACTORIES	22319	68161	3.060	3.070
THE ARAB POTASH / NEW	1100	5205	4.650	4.800
JORDAN PETROLEUM REFINERY	1211	11307	9.380	9.340
JORDAN TANNING	500	3958	7.850	7.850
THE JORDAN WOODSTOCK MILLS	4650	39693	8.700	8.400
ARAB PHARMACEUTICAL MANUFACTURING	19746	77616	4.000	3.970
JORDAN DAIRY	450	1120	2.400	2.220
UNIVERSAL MIDDLE EAST & COMMERCE HOTELS	1600	4335	2.700	2.710
SPINNING & WEAVING	1500	3830	2.600	2.570
KAFTA INDUSTRIES	1350	3275	2.510	2.500
DAR AL DANA DEVELOPMENT & INVESTMENT	1350	10708	8.000	7.900
ARAB INVESTMENT & INTERNATIONAL TRADE	45950	44166	.970	.950
ARAB ALUMINUM INDUSTRIES	3350	24295	7.250	7.250
LIVESTOCK & POULTRY	33100	22320	.670	.670
ARAB BANK CONVERTING & TRADING	20100	30602	1.540	1.520
NATIONAL STEEL INDUSTRIES	2000	6300	3.240	3.150
INTERMEDIATE PETRO-CHEMICAL INDUSTRIES	7700	20635	2.550	2.680
JORDAN ROCCOOL INDUSTRIES	70750	87898	1.240	1.190
UNIVERSAL CHEMICAL INDUSTRIES	40850	162213	4.000	4.000
ALADDIN INDUSTRIES	43000	187050	4.460	4.350
JORDAN INDUSTRIES & MATCH/JINCO	1000	680	.690	.680
NATIONAL CABLE & WIRE MANUFACTURING	2090	9930	4.750	4.750
JORDAN RUBBER-CHEMICALS	5450	10654	1.900	1.880
ARAB CENTER FOR PHARM. & CHEMICALS	2623	6004	2.300	2.280
UNIVERSAL MODERN INDUSTRIES	4550	15767	3.500	3.460
JORDAN INDUSTRIAL RESOURCES CO.	3200	6501	2.060	2.020
INDUSTRIAL SECTOR	341914	864854	INDEX NUMBER: 121.53	CHANGE: -0.40%
GRAND TOTAL	806525	2443043	INDEX NUMBER: 145.91	CHANGE: -0.43%
NO. OF TRADED SHARES IN PARALLEL MARKET		165993		
VALUE TRADED IN PARALLEL MARKET		203224		

Foreign Exchange Market Summary (April 3 - April 7, 1995)

AMMAN — The dollar depreciated sharply against the yen at the end of last week, while appreciating marginally against the mark and sterling. It ended the week 3.44 per cent lower against the yen, 0.42 per cent higher against the mark and 0.15 per cent higher against the sterling.

The U.S. unit related against the yen Monday, it fell to a new record low of 86 yen during trading hours. However, it rose slightly to close at 86.13 yen, despite continued intervention by the Fed to support its currency. Dealers expressed their view that the Fed's intervention added a temporary support to the dollar.

The dollar appreciated against the mark and sterling Tuesday, while stabilising against the yen. The U.S. unit rose as dealers closed their short positions. Meanwhile, February's construction spending showed a decrease of 0.5 per cent compared to a 0.4 per cent consensus forecast.

The U.S. unit continued its decline Wednesday, despite the joint intervention by the Fed, the Bank of Japan, and the Bundesbank. The Fed's intervention came on the back of criticism that the dollar's decline did not attract the Fed's attention. The dollar's decline was attributed to comments of the president of the Bundesbank that it is up to the weak-currency countries to pursue policies that will stabilise their currency.

The dollar declined against the yen Thursday, while dealers anticipated the release of U.S. employment data the following day. The release of U.S. employment figures at the end of the week contributed to the dollar's weakness. The non-farm payrolls showed a rise of 203 thousand in March compared to 345 thousand in the previous month. As a result, the unemployment rate rose to 5.5 per cent from 5.4 per cent. The employment figures confirmed the Fed's expectation that the U.S. economy is experiencing a slower growth.

The U.S. unit, thus ended the week at 1.3788 marks, 83.72 yen and at \$16225 to sterling.

New York Closing Rates for Major Currencies Against the U.S. Dollar

Currency	31/3/95	7/4/95	Percent Change
Sterling Pound	1.6225	1.6143	(0.51)%
Deutsche Mark	1.5730	1.5788	(0.42)%
Swiss Franc	1.1295	1.1288	0.06 %
French Franc	4.8090	4.7855	0.49 %
Japanese Yen	86.60	83.72	3.44 %

Euro-Currency Interest Rates				
Currency	31/3/1995	7/4/1995	1-Month (%)	1-Year (%)
U.S. Dollar	6.00	6.62	6.00	6.56
Sterling Pound	6.31	7.50	6.12	7.44
Deutsche Mark	4.50	4.87	4.44	4.81
Swiss Franc	3.37	3.50	3.12	3.31
French Franc	7.75	6.93	7.31	6.69
Japanese Yen	1.81	1.71	1.56	1.50

Central Bank of Jordan Exchange Rate Bulletin				
Date: 9/4/1995				
Currency	Bid	Offer		
U.S. Dollar	0.6830	0.6850		
Sterling Pound	1.1018	1.1073		
Deutsche Mark	0.4953	0.4978		
Swiss Franc	0.6041	0.6071		
French Franc	0.1426	0.1433		
Japanese Yen	0.8142	0.8183		
Dutch Guilder	0.4429	0.4451		
Swedish Krona	0.0402	0.0404		
Italian Lira	0.0402	0.0404		
Belgian Franc	0.0402	0.0404		

Central Bank of Jordan Exchange Rate Bulletin				
Date: 9/4/1995				
Currency	Bid	Offer		
U.S. Dollar	0.6830	0.6850		
Sterling Pound	1.1018	1.1073		
Deutsche Mark	0.4953	0.4978		
Swiss Franc	0.6041	0.6071		
French Franc	0.1426	0.1433		
Japanese Yen	0.8142	0.8183		
Dutch Guilder	0.4429	0.4451		
Swedish Krona	0.0402	0.0404		
Italian Lira	0.0402	0.0404		
Belgian Franc	0.0402	0.0404		

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Kingdom's Davis Cup team leaves for Dubai today

By Aileen Bannayan
Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — It is again the time of the year when the Davis Cup competition makes tennis world headlines.

Led by veteran team member and 1993 Jordan Open champion, Imad Abu Hamda, Jordan's national tennis team Monday leaves for Dubai to take part in Asia/Oceania Zone Group 3 competition which includes Bangladesh, Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates, Pacific Oceania and Lebanon.

The round robin competition will be played on a daily two singles and one doubles match format over five days with only the top team in the group being promoted to Group 2 whose winner is promoted to Group 1 before joining the prestigious World Group which includes the United States, Germany, Russia, Sweden and others.

Jordan played in Group 2 up until 1993 when they were relegated and stayed in the same group after team veterans Hani Al Ali and Imad Abu Hamda missed the competition last year.

Al Ali has since quit the game and is now member of the Jordan Tennis Federation while Abu Hamda, playing in his sixth Davis Cup tie, will team up with Faris Azzouni, Khaled Al Hussein, and Khaled Nafa' for the competition. Team captain is Talal Maher. Informed sources told the Jordan Times that coach Yousef Oreibi would not be accompanying the team. Oreibi could not be reached for comment.

In a telephone interview



Imad Abu Hamda

with the Jordan Times. Abu Hamda voiced optimism that Jordan would score satisfactory results. "I think we will do well if we get off to a good start (against Bangladesh), but it will take a lot of effort," he said, alluding to the fact that he and Azzouni would be playing singles matches and himself later teaming



Faris Al Azzouni

up with Hussein or Azzouni for the doubles match on the same day. The hectic schedule with the humid weather in the UAE is bound to affect the players who will have less than a day to adapt to the courts and conditions before matches begin Wednesday.

VACANCY WANTED

Jordanian national with the following qualifications seeks job with a regional or international firm:

- British graduate.
- 13 years experience in chemical industry (senior post).
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- Excellent skills in top management, marketing, sales and purchasing.

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INVESTMENT IN TOURISM PROJECTS ON THE EASTERN DEAD SEA SHORE

The Ministry of Water and Irrigation - Jordan Valley Authority (JVA) is conducting engineering studies for the following areas on the Eastern Dead Sea Shore.

- Suweimeh
- Zaza
- And other areas/Dead Sea.

Jordan Valley Authority will start soon receiving applications from investors who wish to invest in the Tourism Sector as part of Suweimeh's First Stage tourism development projects. Advertisement on other areas for development will be made later as soon as engineering studies are completed.

Qualified, experienced, and financially capable parties need only apply regardless of their nationality, and are invited to contact JVA offices/Department of Rural Development to obtain necessary information and fill special application forms. JVA will study such applications and determine preliminary appropriate locations for the proposed projects as a First Stage.

The next step would be to get necessary approvals from the JVA Board of Directors and Cabinet of Ministers. Services such as restaurants, petrol stations, commercial buildings and others are not included in the present stage, but will be advertised at a later date.

JVA has available specially prepared application forms.

Submission of completed forms to the JVA shall start on Saturday 15/4/1995 and end at noon on Monday 15/5/1995.

Secretary General
Eng. Hashim Shbouli

Abu Hamda, who might be playing his last Davis Cup as he will leave for the U.S. soon to pursue his medical career, told the Jordan Times that the team had practised well and that he had greatly benefited from a concentrated 10-day practice session at the Bruguera Training Camp in Spain.

The other singles player, Azzouni, has played Davis Cup before and is expected to be an asset for the team. However the other two players will be playing their first Davis Cup.

Hussein who attends university in the U.S. just recently came back to Amman and is considered a good doubles player, while the fourth member of the team Nafa' is just 15 year-old and lacks competitive match experience.

While the team members feel they have practised well and even received sponsorship from Al Amir Sports, the agents of Prince tennis equipment in Jordan, they undoubtedly lack recent competitive match experience that would put them in the mood for competition, and show any flaws in their training and tactics before the actual competition — something players of all sports but especially the tennis team has always lacked over the years.

More than 115 nations play the Davis Cup every year. The Asia/Oceania Zone Group 3 tournament in Dubai is one of the largest as 13 nations will be playing 108 matches at one single venue.

Brunei, Bahrain, Singapore, Syria, Oman, Kuwait and Kazakhstan are in Group A, while the five other, aforementioned, teams will be playing alongside Jordan's team in Group B.



RJ TO BACK EQUESTRIAN SPORTS: Her Royal Highness Princess Alia Bint Al Hussein on Sunday discusses with Nader Dahabi director general and chief executive officer of Royal Jordanian (RJ) the prospect of having the national air carrier support the activities of the Jordanian Equestrian Sports Federation and the Royal Jordanian Arabian Horse Society. Mr. Dahabi voiced RJ's readiness to cooperate with the federation and the society. Princess Alia was accompanied at the meeting by federation president Rabi' Al Hashem.

Nantes into orbit as PSG tumble

PARIS (AFP) — Nantes, France's unbeaten league leaders, were comfortable 2-0 winners over bottom club Sochaux on Saturday night, but Paris St. Germain's dismal week continued with another defeat here.

Nantes widened the gap at the top to 12 points after the win, secured by Japhet N'Doram and French international striker Nicolas Ouedj, as second-placed Lyon drew 1-1 with Lens on Friday night.

With six matches to play, Nantes are almost certain to replace PSG as champions — only the mathematics prevents them being crowned already.

PSG coach Luis Fernandez paid the price for resting all but two of the side who lost 1-0 to AC Milan in the European Cup semi-final, first leg at the Parc des Princes on Wednesday night.

The reduced strength squad went down 3-2 to Nice. PSG started brightly and even took the lead through Pascal Nouma. But poor defensive work saw the visitors put three past reserve keeper LUC Borrelli — the first in an own goal — before Brazilian Rai salvaged some Parisian pride with a last minute strike.

Despite the goal, the home crowd who had been baying for star striker George Weah and David Ginola to take the pitch, responded by whistling

their team off the pitch. Fernandez defended his team selection, saying: "It wasn't a B team. They had all played in the championship before, but tonight we just weren't there."

But he admitted the title was already destined for Nantes.

"The other players need time to rest. There's no point going all out in this championship. There's still the French Cup, the League Cup and the chance of going to Milan and winning. That's my aim."

Olympique Marseille, who went into receivership on Friday, showed their fighting spirit by going top of the second division thanks to Irish international striker Tony Casciaro.

The Irishman's header opened the scoring in a 2-1 win over Nimes which put Marseille ahead of Guingamp on goal average.

Newcastle head for Europe as Forest struggle

LONDON (AFP) — In a reduced Premiership programme enforced by Sunday's FA Cup semi-finals, Kevin Keegan's Newcastle took centre-stage on Saturday to reinforce their European credentials with a 3-0 win over Norwich.

Peter Beardsley was the chief executioner, deepening the Canaries' relegation worries with two first-half goals.

But fourth-placed Nottingham Forest, also looking to qualify for Europe next season, stalled to a 1-1 draw against relegation candidates West Ham.

Newcastle are now on 67 points, to Manchester United's 74 and leaders Blackburn on 82.

Norwich, struggling for survival after a dire run of form that has seen them plunge from Euro hopefuls to relegation candidates, have taken just eight points from a possible 42 since the New Year.

It was not long before they were in trouble at St. James' Park with England ace Beardsley making no mistake from the penalty spot after just eight minutes when Paul Kitson was upended by Jon Newson.

Beardsley made it 2-0 three minutes before the break with a superb strike from 30 yards before the Magpies increased their lead in the second half when Kitson, latching onto a through ball as the defence stood and stared, coolly ran in the third.

"You have heard it from me all before," said Keegan when asked about another golden goal from Beardsley. "I should put a recording on and just play that every time."

"We are on course to beat our points record from last season. That will be something for me to hang onto

when people say we have not won anything again this season."

Forest, with a run of five successive wins, looked certain to crush third-bottom West Ham at the City ground.

Instead they needed a late equaliser from Stan Collymore — his 22nd goal of the season — to earn the draw.

Julian Dicks' stunning second-half free-kick, a left foot drive into the top right corner after 67 minutes, put his side ahead with his fourth goal of the season, while at the other end Mark Rieper, a defender on loan from Danish club Brondby, was outstanding.

Rieper shackled in-form Collymore and Dutch international Brian Roy so effectively that the Hammers looked sure to steal all the points, especially after Rieper hooked a ball off the line when Forest looked certain to level.

But in the end Collymore, who grabbed a double along with Roy in the 7-1 win over Sheffield Wednesday last week, poached the equaliser 10 minutes from time.

Forest manager Frank was relieved to see his side maintain their unbeaten eight-match run but said: "It never really got going for us today."

"I feared that would be the case after the result last week. I certainly didn't expect another seven but maybe the crowd did."

"We're still in a good position for Europe and it would be a wonderful reward for the players in the first season back in the Premier," added Clark.

Third-bottom West Ham now face Premiership leaders Blackburn, champions Manchester United and League Cup winners Liverpool dur-

ing their final run-in to the end of the season, but manager Harry Redknapp insisted: "We will stay up. Five of our last seven games are at home and we've only lost one of our five matches."

Arsenal, still not entirely clear of relegation trouble, were dealt a 3-1 thrashing from London rivals QPR just two days after the Gunners' Cup Winners Cup semi-final first-leg 3-2 against Sampdoria at Highbury.

Arsenal fell behind to Andrew Impey's 28th minute strike at Loftus Road and further goals after the break from Kevin Gallen and Karl Raddy settled the issue.

There was a consolation goal for Arsenal captain Tony Adams with five minutes to go as his side slumped to 12th in the table.

Arsenal wanted the match put back 24 hours because of the demanding Cup Winners' Cup victory but Rangers refused.

Manager Stewart Houston admitted: "We looked tired from the start. I believe that before the season began there was a gentleman's agreement between clubs to move fixtures after European games. That has not been upheld."

"We have four league games to play before the second leg with Sampdoria. The Italians only have two, sometimes you wonder how the fixtures pan out."

The other Premiership match saw Sheffield Wednesday see off Leicester 1-0 to creep back in the top ten.

The win was an impressive show of resilience by Wednesday, who bounced back from the horror 7-1 defeat against Forest on the back of former Aston Villa striker Guy Whittingham's 39th minute winner from a header.

Navratilova to team with Graf for Wimbledon doubles

NEW YORK (Agencies) — Martina Navratilova and Steffi Graf, who faced each other on centre court in three consecutive Wimbledon finals in the 1980s, will team up to play doubles at Wimbledon this year, a spokeswoman for Navratilova's agent, IMG, said Saturday.

Linda Dozoretz of IMG said the 38-year-old Navratilova was excited by the prospect of returning to Wimbledon with former rival Graf, who will regain her world number one ranking Monday.

Navratilova retired from singles competition amid much fanfare at the end of the 1994 season. She left Wimbledon on a high note last year with a stirring run to the final, falling just short of her 10th Wimbledon singles title with a loss to Conchita Martinez.

Navratilova, who is participating in a women's "Legends" Tour with other retired tennis greats, will be going for her eighth women's doubles title at Wimbledon this summer. She won five times with Pam Shriver and once each with Chris Evert and Billie Jean King.

Graf, who rarely plays doubles these days, teamed with Gabriela Sabatini to claim the Wimbledon crown in 1988, the same year Graf won all four Grand Slam singles titles and an Olympic gold medal.

Dozoretz said Navratilova had planned to make the announcement of her return to Wimbledon later this month at the Fed Cup, where she will play doubles for the United States. But word of the superstar pairing began to leak out this weekend at the Legends venue.

She said Graf and Navratilova had practiced together last year at Wimbledon.

They met in the Wimbledon singles final in 1987, 1988 and 1989 with Navratilova the first and Graf the next two.



Martina Navratilova

Martina loses to Evert

In Wesley Chapel, Florida, Martina Navratilova was shut out on the clay courts of saddlebrook resort on Saturday, losing two doubles matches and a singles match-up with longtime rival Chris Evert.

In the first stop on the Virginia Slims Legends Tour featuring former tennis stars, Navratilova and Francoise Durr fell 6-4 to Tracy Austin and Betty Stove. Then they were whipped 6-2 by Evert and Hana Mandlikova.

Later, Evert beat Navratilova in three pro sets 7-3, 6-7, 7-6, the first player to reach seven points is the winner.

"I've been playing on hard courts. I haven't played that much on clay," Navratilova said. "But I thought I got better as I went on."

Team Evert — Mandlikova, Olga Morozova and Evert — dominated the round-robin action, going undefeated in their matches.

In the semifinal, Evert will team up with Morozova to take on Austin and Stove.

Navratilova and Durr will face Billie Jean King and Wendy Turnbull in the other

semifinal. "We wanted people to see that we can still play," Navratilova said.

The Evert-Navratilova singles shootout was the highlight of the day, offering the rebirth of one of the best rivalries in sports history.

The match was indicative of their close encounters during the 1970s and 1980s. Evert, despite being retired from the Women's Tennis Association Tour for five years, looked sharper than Navratilova, who retired after the Virginia Slims Championships last November.

Cinema	Tel.: 634144	Cinema	Tel.: 699238	Cinema	Tel.: 677420	Tel.: 618274 - 618275	Tel.: 675571	Nabli & Hisham's Tel.: 621535
PHILADELPHIA		PLAZA		CONCORD		AMMOUN THEATRE	Nabli Al Mashini Theatre	AHLAN THEATRE
Tom Hanks in Forrest Gump Shows: 12:30, 3:15, 6:15, 9:15		Jala Fahmi, Kamal Shinnawi Najah Al Mawji... In TATA WARIKA AND MR. KATHEM Shows: 12:30, 3:30, 5:00, 6:30, 8:30, 10:30		CONCORD '1' Comedian star: Adel Imam — Bakhit & Andadileh Shows: 12:30, 3:15, 6:00, 8:30, 11:00 CONCORD '2' Jean-Claude Van Damme STREET FIGHTER Shows: 12:30, 3:30, 5:45, 11:00		Musa Hijazin "Sum'a" in the political satire Hi Citizen written and directed by Mohammad Al Shawaqfa daily on 8:30 p.m. The theatre closes on Monday — Haifa Al Agha in the children's play ☆☆ Sa'd's Return ☆☆☆	Shows of "Qirbeh Makhzouqa" will be stopped from now until further notice.	Presents: AL SALAM YA SALAM at 8:30 p.m. For reservation, please call 625155 The theatre is closed Saturdays & Sundays

Sports

Martinez and Sabatini in Florida finals

AMELIA ISLAND (Agencies) — Top-seeded Conchita Martinez and second-seeded Gabriela Sabatini will face each other for the 14th time in their career in the \$130,000 Bausch Lomb championships final.

The seventh-ranked Sabatini of Argentina earned her final berth with a 6-3, 6-2 semifinal victory over eighth-seeded Sabine Hack of Germany.

Ranked fourth in the world, Martinez of Spain moved into the final with a 5-2, 6-3 win over third-seeded Magdalena Maleeva of Bulgaria.

Sabatini leads Martinez 9-4 in their career head-to-head, but the Spaniard has won two of their last three meetings. The last time they played was at the German Open in 1993.

While Martinez will be competing in her first final at Amelia Island, Sabatini is practically a regular in the finals here. The Argentine has played here for 11 straight years, including the last six years, and has won the title in 1992, 1991 and 1989.

"It's my home," Sabatini said of the picturesque stadium court. "I think I'll bring my bed out here."

Sabatini, who has beaten the 27th-ranked back two times they have played, raced to 4-0 in the first set. But despite the quick lead, Sabatini was feeling low on energy in the first set.

Serving for the set at 15-15 in the ninth game, Sabatini asked the umpire to call for the trainer to come on-court during the next changeover.

After closing-out the set with an ace, the trainer gave Sabatini an electrolyte replenishing drink and a plastic bag of ice to hold on her neck.

"...was a little weak," Sabatini said. "I started to feel it in the first set after a few games."

Despite not feeling well in the first set, Sabatini played an excellent match and served very well.

"It was like I had total control of the serve, knew where I wanted the serve to go and the ball went right where," Sabatini said.

"In the second set, Sabatini also successfully used the drop shot to force back away from the baseline."

After back hand serve at 15-15 in the third game of the second set, Sabatini won the next five to take the match.

"She's something of a legend and I did have a little respect for her," Hack said of Sabatini.

Martinez now has a 4-1 winning edge over the ninth-ranked Maleeva in career meetings. They played in last week's Hilton Head final where Martinez won even easier with a 6-1, 6-1 score.

"I won a few more games than last week," Maleeva said. "I don't think I'm doomed against her every-

time we'll play."

Since Martinez, the reigning Wimbledon champion, is playing such sharp and consistent tennis, Maleeva was forced into trying a variety of tactics. Although her varied efforts — coming in to the net, belting groundstrokes, trying drop shots — didn't work, Maleeva deserves credit for exhausting her options.

"I played a good match and she's a dangerous player," Martinez said. "I think she got a little desperate when I just kept in there."

Martinez, who only made 10 unforced errors in the match, forced Maleeva into executing 34 unforced errors.

Martinez had a 5-0 lead before Maleeva won the next two games in the first set.

In the second set, Martinez was serving for the match at 5-2. But Maleeva held off the Spaniard for one more game when she hit a blistering groundstroke down the line on her second break point.

Muster ousts Sanchez

In Lisbon, Portugal, third-seeded Austrian Thomas Muster ousted Spanish veteran Emilio Sanchez 6-2, 6-4 Saturday in the \$575,000 Estoril Open, setting up a final meeting with unseeded Alberto Costa.

Costa, who upset second-seeded Ukrainian Andrei Medvedev in Friday's quarterfinals, routed France's Fabrice Santoro 6-1, 6-4 in the other match.

The 1993 European junior champion and ranked 58th by the ATP tour, Costa took only 56 minutes to beat Santoro, a Frenchman ranked seven places higher than him.

Muster took a little more time against the 29-year-old Sanchez, winning in 69 minutes under blazing sun on the center court of the National Stadium between Lisbon and the Riviera resort of Estoril.

It was the 27-year-old Austrian's first ever victory over Sanchez on clay, although Muster beat the Spaniard once in five sets on a slower surface in a 1990 Davis Cup tie.

Seeded players have fared badly in this year's fifth Estoril Open.

Favourite Alberto Berasategui of Spain bowed out in the first round against unseeded local hero Nuno Marques, as did last year's winner and eighth seed, Spaniard Carlos Costa, who lost to American Bryan Shelton.

All other seeds but Medvedev bowed out in the second round and Medvedev fell 6-3, 6-2 to finalist Costa in the quarterfinals.

In doubles, Russian top-seeds Yevgeni Kafelnikov and Andrei Olhovskiy will face German Marc Goellner and Italian Diego Nargiso in the final.

Kafelnikov and Olhovskiy beat Spaniards Sergio Casal and Emilio Sanchez in the semifinal's 4-6, 7-5, 6-4.

Tyson's targets: McCall and Seldon

LAS VEGAS (AFP) — Oliver McCall and Bruce Seldon won world heavyweight titles here Saturday, taking their place as the prime targets in Mike Tyson's comeback bid.

McCall looked sluggish but remained the World Boxing Council champion by taking a unanimous but narrow decision over 45-year-old former champion Larry Holmes, who retired after the loss.

"He gave me one hell of a battle," McCall said after his first title defence. "He had a good jab. But if you count, I had a better jab."

Seldon won by technical knockout over ex-champ Tony Tucker after seven rounds for the vacant World Boxing Association crown stripped from George Foreman last month.

Both winners become contenders for an eventual big-money fight against ex-champion Tyson, who is readying to comeback bid after serving a three-year prison term for rape.

"We might have them fight each other to unify the titles and the winner fight Tyson," promoter Don King said. "Separate fights might be the way we go. Tyson is the boss. I will march to his orders."

King said a title fight between McCall and England's Frank Bruno is another possibility. But Tyson's desires will get top priority.

"The fans of the world are waiting for Tyson with a hunger and insatiable appetite," Tyson's former sparring partner McCall won judge's decisions by 114-113, 115-114 and 115-112. He rose to 26-5 despite fighting at Holmes' pace much of the bout, even looking away at times due to his ego.

"That was a little overconfidence on my part," McCall said. "A sparring partner would not look over. But a superstar can do those things. It's the last time though. I can't do that against Tyson."

Holmes, controlled the pace of the fight from the start, keeping McCall off balance with his strong right hand. Holmes spent the first two rounds at a plodding pace and the next two in the corners.

The elder fighter began the middle rounds with hard, quick flurries and spent the latter halves of rounds near the ropes to conserve energy.

Holmes stayed in contention until the ninth round, when a left jab caught him as he was backpedalling to a corner and opened a deep gash under his left eye. McCall never put Holmes away, but the ex-champ had no strength for the knockout blow he needed to win.

"There's no sense in me going on anymore," said Holmes, who finished 61-5. "I had my opportunity."

Seldon took the WBA crown left vacant when 46-year-old Foreman chose not to fight Tucker.

Seldon scored a technical knockout when ring doctor Flip Homansky stopped the bout after the seventh round. Seldon rose to 32-3 with 28 knockouts. Tucker fell to 52-3.

"I was focused and determined to win this battle," Seldon said. "It took an awful lot out of me. He hurt me a little bit."

The physician was worried about Tucker's left eye, which had been swollen shut for the final four rounds. Homansky feared there were bone fragments in Tucker's eye from a possible broken nose.

"I was concerned more for his eyesight than his title shot," said Homansky, who conferred briefly with referee Mills Lane before telling Tucker, "That's it son."

Tucker, whose other two losses came in world title bouts, was sitting on the stool in his corner when the verdict came. Already slowed by Seldon, he was stunned by the decision.

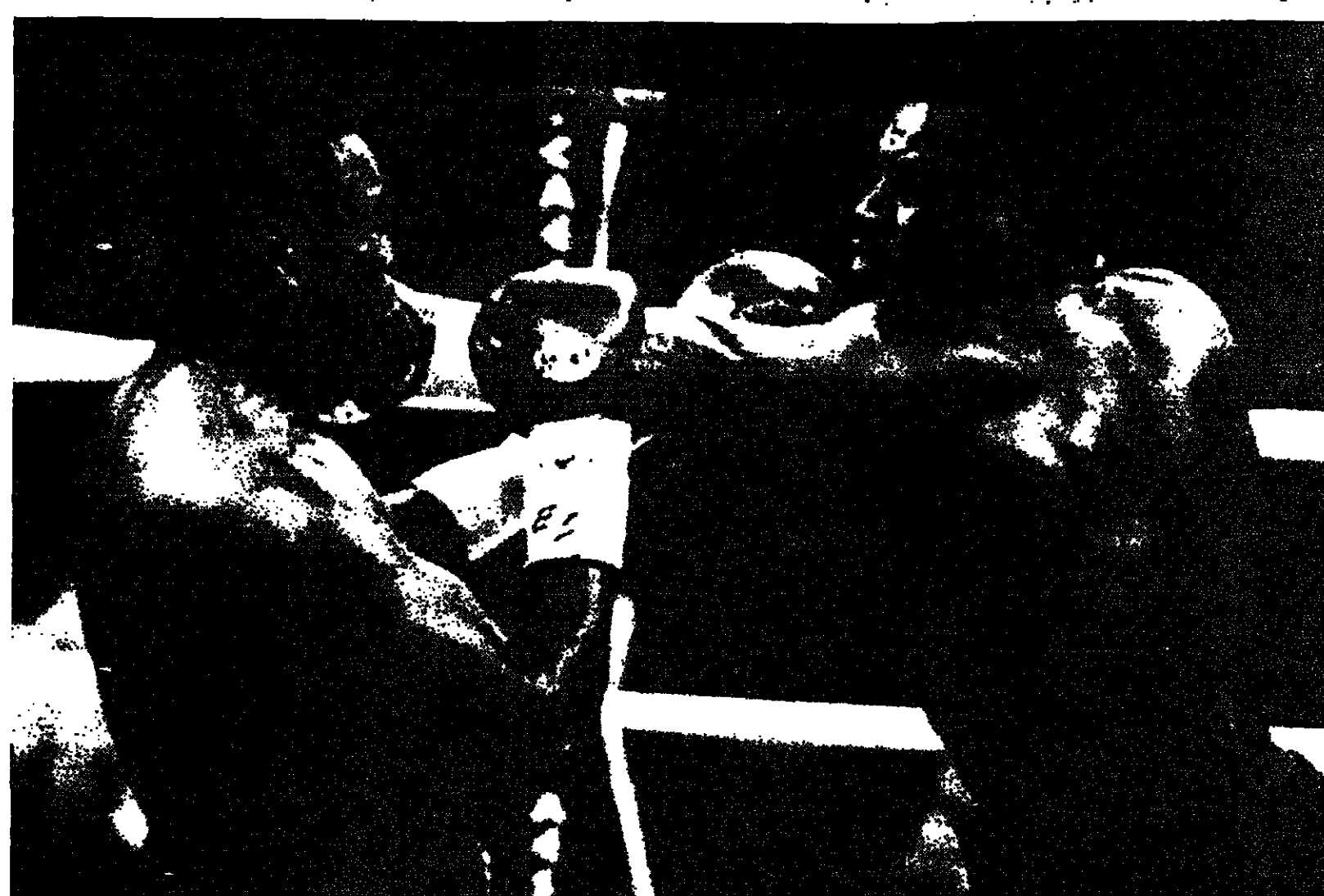
"Don't let it happen like this man. It can't end like this," pleaded Tucker, who protested the result.

"The doctor did not give me any indication at all he was going to stop the fight," Tucker said. "I was waiting to get him in the later rounds. What the hell is going on with boxing?"

Seldon heard Tucker's complaints and said, "Come on man, it's a sport," to which Tucker replied, "Give me a rematch man, because you know that was wrong."

Such a fight is unlikely, because the triumph puts Seldon, 28, on a path that might lead to a multi-million-dollar title bout against Tyson within a year.

Promoter Don King said he would call for a rematch if losses came in world title bouts, was sitting on the stool in his corner when the verdict came. Already slowed by Seldon, he was stunned by the decision.



WBC heavyweight champion Oliver McCall (right) of the U.S. and 45-year-old challenger Larry Holmes exchange punches in their April 8 title bout at Caesars Palace in Las Vegas (AFP photo)

Chavez retains title

Julio Cesar Chavez successfully defended his World Boxing super lightweight title here Saturday, taking a unanimous decision over 1988 Olympic gold medalist Giovanni Parisi of Italy.

Chavez, in the 33rd title fight of his 15-year career, rose to 94-1 with one draw by overpowering Parisi, who fell to 29-2.

Chavez dominated his fight, even taunting Parisi through the final three rounds. Chavez dropped his gloves, stuck his chin out unprotected and even pointed at his chin to antagonize Parisi though he could not knock him out.

Judges gave Chavez the fight by scores of 120-107, 118-109 and 118-109.

The fight was among three world title bouts on the undercard of two world heavyweight title matchups.

In the others, Luis Santana won while flat on his back in the second straight fight against Terry Norris after an illegal blow and Puerto Rico's unbeaten Felix Trinidad kept his International Boxing Federation welterweight title for the sixth time, beating U.S. fighter Roger Turner by technical knockout at 2:28 of the second round.

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Draft election law ensures equality, Hammad says

By Sa'eda Kilani
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — Minister of Interior Salameh Hammad said Sunday the ministry had prepared a draft election law to facilitate electoral and registration procedures but essentially based on the one-person, one-vote formula.

Mr. Hammad said the one-person, one-vote formula would ensure better representation of all layers of the society.

He said the number of voters had dramatically increased in the 1993 parliamentary elections, the first time Jordanians voted on the basis of the one-person, one-vote formula.

The number of voters rose from 541,426 in 1989 to 822,294 in 1993, Mr. Hammad said. He dismissed contentions that the current election law consecrate tribalism.

"There are now 36 deputies in Parliament who represent political parties and eight others who have pan-Arab affiliations," Mr. Hammad said.

However, the draft law is not final and is subject to changes and amendments by specialists and deputies, he stressed.

"I'm not in a position to defend the law. I am open to all suggestions," Mr. Hammad said at a conference held at the Royal Cultural Centre and organised by the National Society for Freedom and Democracy.

"The draft law will be pre-



Salameh Hammad

sented to Parliament. The amendments might not reflect all points of view but they will certainly express the majority's," the minister said.

Mr. Hammad said it was important that a law corresponds to the Jordanian society's structure and orientation.

On technical procedures that deal with registration and voting, Mr. Hammad said the ministry made several proposals to overcome problems and complaints that surfaced in the 1993 elections.

The ministry proposed to extend the registration period from 15 days — as in the current law — to five months.

Former senator Husni Ayesh, who also addressed the gathering, said the period

was too long and proposed that it be reduced.

Mr. Hammad said the draft law will also facilitate transfer of voters from one district to another. He said voters will only be required to register their request at the civil status office and will get instant approval if they meet the requirements.

According to the draft law, the transfer does not necessitate the approval of the minister of interior as is the case in the current law.

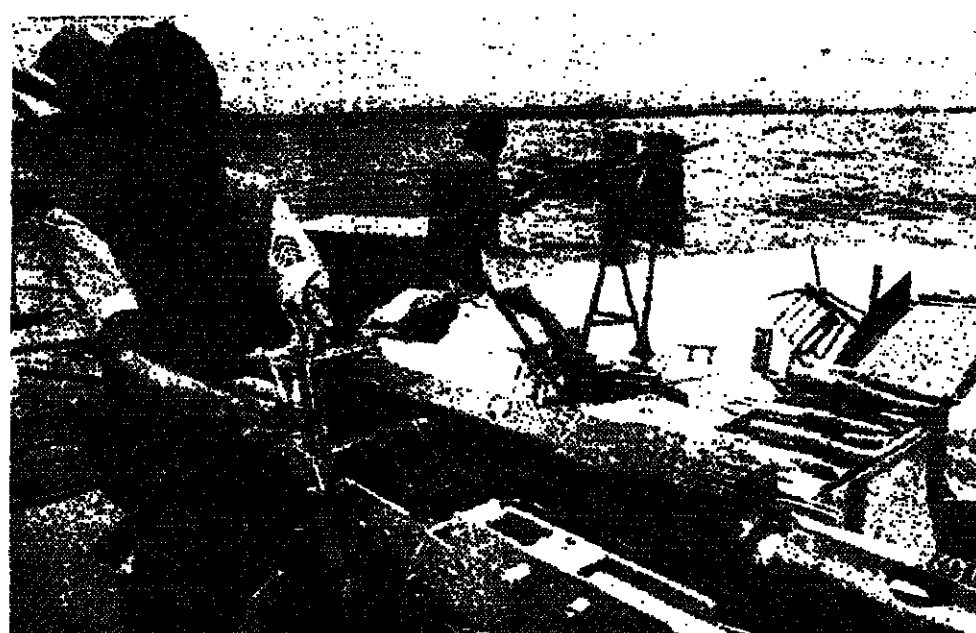
The minister also said that the ballot boxes will not be transferred from one place to another; the voting centre will also serve as the ballot-counting centre.

Mr. Ayesh said there should be more freedom of expression to opposition in the Kingdom. He said that the status in Jordan was better than in many countries in the region but although democracy had been the Kingdom's choice since its establishment it was not deep-rooted.

Mr. Ayesh also said the National Charter — "that expressed the different points of view of the different social layers" — was being ignored. He said the draft election law does not ensure equality among Jordanians.

According to the human rights activist, some areas in the Kingdom that are densely populated are represented by one deputy while other areas with less population are represented by two or three deputies.

(Continued on page 7)



Philippine navy personnel man machine guns as they patrol a rebel sanctuary south of the town of Ipil (AFP photo)

Sporadic protests continue in Bahrain

NICOSIA (Agencies) — Sporadic anti-government protests continued in some of Bahrain's Shiite Muslim villages over the weekend but the situation in the capital Manama and nearby areas was calm, residents said on Sunday.

They said villagers in Karzakan and nearby Dumistan, 20 kilometres southwest of Manama, blocked roads and burned tyres in the early hours of Saturday. Protests were also reported in the small village of Bori.

A police helicopter was seen hovering over the area during the day and dozens of riot police rushed to the scene, they added. There were no immediate reports of casualties.

But the situation in other areas was quiet with no reports of riots or arson attacks. Riot police, backed by armoured vehicles, were seen patrolling the main road leading to villages west of Manama on Saturday, they said.

Some shops, mainly in Shiite villages, observed a strike on Saturday in response to a call by an exiled opposition group to press for political reforms and protest against a government crackdown on dissidents.

But the call was largely ignored in Manama where business life was normal, residents said. They said about 30 people were freed from detention two days ago but also reported new arrests.

Hundreds of people have been detained in the four-month-old anti-government unrest in which at least 10 civilians and three policemen have so far been reported killed.

GCC to discuss unrest

Interior ministers from the six-nation Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) are to discuss political unrest in Bahrain at a special meeting in Manama on April 18, officials said Sunday.

The ministers will also discuss coordinating security measures in the region. Bahrain's Deputy Interior Minister Ibrahim Ben Mohammad Al Khalifa told the Saudi daily newspaper Okaz.

Philippine army pursues drive against Abu Sayyaf

SIOCON (Agencies) — Government troops exchanged machine gunfire Sunday with extremists who sacked a town last week, but soldiers complained that logistic problems and other foulups were hampering efforts to catch the gunmen.

Major Nehrur Yurong, a battalion commander, said at least 19 Abu Sayyaf gunmen had been killed in pursuit operations since an estimated 200 gunmen attacked the town of Ipil, killing 53 people. Three government militiamen have also been killed, he said.

Maj. Yurong said the gunmen had split into at least three groups and were eluding troops in the rugged, forested mountains about 50 kilometres west of Ipil.

Air force helicopters rocketed suspected Abu Sayyaf bands Sunday for a fourth straight day but it was unclear if the attacks resulted in casualties. Maj. Yurong said the gunmen have been planting claymore mines along trails and booby-trapping their dead.

Southern command military chief Major General Edgardo Batanga said the dead were 19 Abu Sayyaf gunmen, six government troops and five civilian hostages believed shot dead by their fleeing captors.

Two Abu Sayyaf gunmen were captured and are being questioned by the military, Gen. Batanga said.

Although seven hostages were able to escape, the raiders still held 37 civilians, he told reporters. He said 7,000 families in three towns have been forced to flee their homes.

"It is hard to wipe them off. It's just like guerrilla warfare," he said in his headquarters in Zamboanga City, 100 kilometres south of Ipil. "Hopefully, we can make a turnaround within two months."

Gen. Batanga, who took over from the relieved Brigadier General Regino Lacson, said that between 160 to 175 heavily armed Abu Sayyaf gunmen, aboard buses and boats joined in the raid on Ipil on Tuesday, but half of them managed to escape via the sea.

President Fidel Ramos, a former military chief of staff and defence secretary, visited Ipil, about 770 kilometres south of Manila, on Saturday and urged commanders to "go get these terrorists."

Algerian rebel leader ready for peace

NICOSIA (R) — The leader of one of Algeria's main armed Islamist groups has told the army-backed government he wants negotiations to try to end the country's three-year-old violence.

Mezrak Madani, head of the Islamic Salvation Army (AIS), said in a statement obtained by Reuters on Sunday.

"We are ready to go further with those who are honest and eager among our people, if we find in them good intention to support religion, to throw away injustice (now imposed) upon the people and to save the homeland."

The AIS is the armed wing of the outlawed Islamic Salvation Front (FIS) and is seen as more open to possible negotiation than the more ruthless Armed Islamic Group (GIA).

Mr. Madani's five-page statement made no specific concessions.

It was his second appeal for moves to a swift and peaceful solution, following one in March in which he had signed himself "national emir of the FIS and the AIS."

Significantly, the AIS leader signed his latest call merely "caretaker national emir of the Islamic Salvation Army," with no suggestion that he was also head of the FIS, the only real recognised political voice of the Muslim fundamentalists.

He stressed the AIS's loyalty to the FIS, saying "the FIS is, and remains, the premier political force in Algeria and cannot be surpassed," adding that the AIS appeal gave the "green light" to the FIS leadership to take "the decisive decision in the interests of the religion, people and homeland."

FIS supreme leaders Abassi Madani and Ali Belhadj are jailed in Algeria. They were arrested before a general election in December 1991 in which the FIS took a huge first-round lead. The authorities in January 1992 scrapped the poll, the FIS was outlawed and the two men were later jailed for 12 years each.

Algerian President Liamine Zeraoui last year acknowledged he had held talks with the FIS leaders to try to end the bloodshed in which some 40,000 people have now died. But he later said his efforts had failed because of "their intransigence."

Islamists sources, who passed Mezrak Madani's statement to Reuters, said it "is a test of the authorities' goodwill and honesty before public opinion, to reach a solution to satisfy all the parties."

Mr. Mezrak Madani said: "We raise anew our resounding voice and (make a) striking appeal to those eager for religion, the people and the interests of the homeland to hurry and move to save what can be saved and cut the pathway of the eradicators who throw to the fields of death the deprived among our people."

China vice mayor commits suicide

BEIJING (R) — The suicide of a senior Chinese official under suspicion of corruption has exposed the extent of investigations into high-level graft in the Communist Party, analysts said Sunday.

Wang Baosen, 60, one of two executive vice mayors of Beijing and chairman of the Municipal Planning Commission, shot himself in the mountains in Huairou County on the outskirts of Beijing last Tuesday evening, Xinhua News Agency said. He was the first senior official reported to have committed suicide since the end of the radical 1966-76 Cultural Revolution, when hundreds of officials killed themselves to escape persecution as alleged rightwingers.

Chinese sources said Mr. Wang might have committed suicide not only under pressure of the probe into corruption, a charge carrying the death penalty, but knowing he could be sacrificed to protect even more senior officials.

"Wang's suicide is an example of the Chinese proverb 'sacrifice the pawn to save the general'," said a Chinese source familiar with the case. Mr. Wang, who appeared in public, just hours before shooting himself, at the high-profile funeral of a Beijing policeman shot on duty, was the latest target of a rapidly widening corruption probe in the upper ranks of the Communist Party.

Indian father burns daughter

BOMBAY (AFP) — A Bombay father repeatedly burnt his teenage daughter with an iron rod after she escaped from her shanty home to avoid being sold into prostitution, police said Sunday.

Nareh Wadke, a 40-year-old trucker, was arrested Saturday after social activists took a letter pleading for help to the police. His 15-year-old daughter Bindiya had managed to smuggle the message out. Police told AFP that Bindiya had been taken to a state-run children's home in the western city and her father charged with causing "grievous hurt."

Activist Hema Patkar said Bindiya had been badly burnt when she returned home Monday after fleeing with her boyfriend to avoid being sold to a 35-year-old alleged pimp. "Her father beat her badly. He heated an iron and put it on her right cheek, saying: 'You spoke against me with this mouth, so I am burning it. You ran away from home with this foot, so I am burning it,'" Patkar said. "Her ears and cheek have been burnt to the flesh," she said.

"Her foot too has been severely burnt," Bindiya, in her statement to police, described the thrice-married Wadke, who lived with two wives, as a hard-drinking monster who took his young daughters to sleazy bars and commanded them to "entertain" strange men. "My father says he would sell his daughters if he ever falls short of money. He told me Prashant (her boyfriend) loves me, he should pay 50,000 rupees (\$1,562). Only then would he let me go with him. 'Please help us to keep our love alive,' she added.

Bombay, India's financial capital, reputedly houses the country's largest and most exotic red light district.

Prince Edward laments cut in public funds

LONDON (AP) — He is doing well in television production, but isn't ready for marriage. And he sorely feels his loss of public funding. In an interview with London's Evening Standard newspaper, Prince Edward spoke at length about his company, Ardent Productions, his royal role and his plans for the future. In the interview, published Friday, the youngest child of Queen Elizabeth II said the decision three years ago to stop his £96,000 (then \$152,000) a year from the public payroll had hit him "like a kick in the teeth."

Now he funds some of his charity work from his private income, he said, "but it's not a satisfactory way of proceeding." "It opens up the possibilities of straying beyond what people might regard as right and proper and being susceptible to market forces. Before I was in nobody's pocket," he said.

Arabs go into U.N. debate divided over NPT extension

CAIRO (AFP) — Arab states will be divided in their vote on an extension of the Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) in New York despite Egypt's campaign to forge an united stand and insist Israel joins the nuclear pact.

Foreign ministers from Arab League countries meeting in Cairo in March condemned "the fait accompli which holds all Middle East countries, except Israel, to comply to the non-proliferation regime" as "inadmissible."

However, they acknowledged there will be no "Arab vote" and that each country will take its own position at the United Nations conference in New York from April 17 to May 12.

The United States and Europe want the assembly to pass an unlimited and unconditional renewal of the NPT.

Out of the 22 Arab League members, 18 will be present in New York. Oman, the United Arab Emirates, Bahrain and the Comoros Islands are not members of the treaty.

A senior league official said several of the Gulf Arab states, along with Tunisia and Morocco, intend to bend to American demands and join in an indefinite extension.

Lebanese Foreign Minister Fares Borez revealed that Washington put "enormous pressure" on Arab states for their NPT vote.

Egypt, backed by Syria, has been pushing Arab states for the past several months to refuse to sign an unlimited extension unless Israel commits to joining the NPT.

The Jewish state says it cannot sign the pact without first concluding a regional peace which includes Iran, Iraq and Libya, which it says threaten its existence.

Egypt says Israel's nuclear arsenal, which Western experts estimate at 200 warheads, constitutes a direct threat to its security. It calls for immediate negotiations to make the Middle East free of weapons of mass destruction.

Cairo dismissed as "cosmetic" a pledge Thursday by the five permanent members of the U.N. Security Council in which they promised not to use nuclear weapons against any non-nuclear member nation of the NPT.

It has asked for amendments to the draft containing "a clear indication of the mandatory action to be adopted by the Security Council" if a non-nuclear state were to come under attack.

In a meeting on Thursday in Paris, Egyptian Foreign Minister Amr Musa and his Israeli counterpart Shimon Peres failed to reach a compromise in their dispute as Washington had urged.

Now Egyptian officials have adopted a more flexible approach. President Hosni Mubarak said in Washington on Wednesday that Egypt did not insist Israel "join the NPT now, or tomorrow."

While he would not commit to signing an unlimited extension, Mr. Mubarak promised not to lobby other states against it.

"We understand Israel's security problems and we want to find solutions for them, but we cannot accept being under the Israeli nuclear threat indefinitely," the head of the disarmament bureau of the foreign ministry, Mahmoud Kareem, told AFP.

Jordanian Foreign Minister Abdul Karim Kabariti told reporters in Amman on Sunday that Arab foreign ministers will meet in New York soon to discuss a common stand on the NPT. He did not say when the meeting will take place.

Iran said working with rebels to oust Saddam

CAIRO (Agencies) — Iran, anticipating increasing Turkish involvement in northern Iraq, has launched a fresh effort with the main Iraqi opposition groups to topple President Saddam Hussein, a Kurdish rebel leader says.

Jalal Talabani, head of Patriotic Union of Kurdistan (PUK), told the London-based Arabic daily Al Hayat that Iranian authorities are working with both Kurds in the north and Shiite Muslim groups in the southern marches.

Iran's backing to President Saddam's opponents, in particular to Shiite groups, has never been a secret. But it is the first time an opposition leader openly said Iran was involved in the attempt to remove President Saddam from power.

"The Iraqi opposition groups have moved to the confrontation with Baghdad," Mr. Talabani said in an interview with the paper at his headquarters in the Kurdish-controlled enclave in northern Iraq.

He noted one reason for the Iranian push was that Turkey was seeking to resolve differences between Iraq and the Kurds as a way to neutralise the Kurdish Labour Party (PKK), which is carrying out a campaign against the Turkish government.

Mr. Talabani, whose group has been engaged in a bloody feud with its main rival, the

Kurdish Democratic Party, said the Iranians want the two groups to end their fight before launching their plans against President Saddam.

"Tehran is trying a reconciliation between the Kurds so that they can join other Iraqi opposition forces in an action against Baghdad," he said.

He said delegations from the two groups were in Tehran trying to end their differences.

Last month Mr. Talabani's rebels and fighters of the umbrella group, the Iraqi National Congress, launching a string of attacks against the army in the northern areas.

The assaults were apparently part of a new opposition strategy backed by Mr. Talabani aimed at putting pressure on the Iraqi army as a way to convince soldiers to defect to the rebels.

The attacks came to a halt after the Turkish incursion into northern Iraq late last month, which is aimed at denying the PKK a refuge.

In Ankara, the PUK said Sunday it had agreed on a ceasefire with the KPP, a decision that could ease the way for Turkish troops to end the three-week-old drive into northern Iraq.

Shazad Saib, the Ankara-based representative of the PUK, said his group welcomed the two-week ceasefire declared on Friday by the KDP.

Iraq orders ban on access to Americans' lawyer

BAGHDAD (AP) — Iraq on Sunday banned journalists from contacting a lawyer defending two Americans jailed for entering the country illegally.

The Information Ministry also announced that Baghdad-based reporters and Iraqis working for Western news organisations would not be allowed to attend court proceedings when the Americans appeal their conviction later this week.

David Daliberti, 41, and William Barloon, 39, strayed into Iraq on March 13 while visiting friends at a United Nations post near the border.

The pair, who worked for American defence contractors in Kuwait, were convicted and sentenced to eight years in prison on March 25.

No explanation was given for the Information Ministry's restrictions. But an official said violators will be barred from working in Iraq.

The ban followed reports of difficult conditions in the maximum security prison of Abu Ghraib near Baghdad.

Their lawyers, Khaled Jarjes, said last week that the men had complained that their cell was too small and requested that they be moved to a larger room.

NEWS IN BRIEF

Holbrooke ends visit to Greece

ATHENS (AFP) — Richard Holbrooke, U.S. assistant secretary of state for European affairs, left Athens Sunday after a round of meetings that focused on differences between Greece and Turkey. Mr. Holbrooke handed Greek Prime Minister Andreas Papandreu a letter from U.S. President Bill Clinton touching on problems between both countries. Mr. Papandreu will reply next week, his spokesman Telemachus Hyiris said. Mr. Holbrooke also met Greek Defence Minister Gerassimos Arsenis and Foreign Minister Carolas Papoulas, who said later that both sides agreed progress had to be made on Cyprus in order to improve relations between Athens and Ankara. The pro-government To Vima weekly said Mr. Clinton's letter pleaded for joint, trust-building measures between Greece and Turkey to help settle differences in the Aegean and prevent any naval or air incident in the region.

UAE coast guards seize hashish

ABU DHABI (AFP) — United Arab Emirates (UAE) coast guards have seized more than one tonne of hashish and arrested three Iranian drugs smugglers, the Interior Ministry said Sunday. Around 527 kilograms of the drugs were seized off the northern port of Fujairah in the Gulf of Oman, the ministry said in a statement to local newspapers. Police investigations led them to 285 kilograms of hashish concealed in a house in the nearby emirate of Ras Al Khaimah and another 319 kilograms in the mountains in Fujairah, the statement said. The three confessed to police they had accomplices in the UAE and the smuggling was organised by the head of the gang in Pakistan. The drugs were to be smuggled to other countries in the region, where other gang members were waiting to receive them, the statement said. The ministry had contacted authorities in those countries to arrest the remaining gang members, but did not identify which states they were. It was the second biggest drug haul in the UAE, which is favoured by international drug gangs because of its poorly-guarded long coastline.

French, Kuwaiti navies start exercises

KUWAIT (AP) — French and Kuwaiti navies Sunday started a four-day exercise with live ammunition in the Gulf off the emirate's southern shore, the Kuwaiti Defence Ministry said. The exercise, code-named Gulf Pearl, is the latest in a series of manoeuvres the emirate has conducted with its Gulf war allies since liberation from Iraqi occupation in February 1991. They are designed to train Kuwait's small military and reaffirm support for the emirate's security. The French frigate Commandante Bory, carrying Exocet anti-ship missiles and a crew of 160, is taking part in the exercise near Umm Al Maradim and Qaruh, about 30 kilometres off the coastal town of Mina' Sa'ud near the Saudi border. A Defence Ministry statement said the navy's Sanbouk missile boat and a number of air force F/A-18 Hornet fighter bombers were participating.

Israel plans centre to fight Russian mafia

TEL AVIV (AFP) — Police Minister Moshe Shahal plans to set up an international centre in Israel to coordinate the fight against the Russian mafia, the daily Yediot Aharanot reported Sunday. Police ministers from 24 Mediterranean countries are to discuss the project at a meeting organised by the United Nations at the end of April in Cairo, the newspaper said. Various countries with no diplomatic ties with Israel such as Libya and Algeria may be involved in the plan, it added. The centre is to be set up in several months at Shfarim police college in Israel's northern Galilee region. It may receive U.N. funding and will be headed by Israeli, U.S. French, English and Egyptian experts in drug-trafficking, money-laundering, counterfeiting and international terrorism. "Yediot Aharanot said. A police spokesman would not confirm or deny the report. Mr. Shahal outlined a similar proposal at an Interpol conference held in Naples, Italy, two months ago to discuss the fight against organised crime. Israel has increasingly become a centre of Russian mafia activity following the arrival of around half a million Jewish immigrants from the former Soviet Union in the past five years.